

U.S. TENNIS PRO REVEALS ALL **PLAYBOY**

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**SELMA
BLAIR**
HOT AS
HELLBOY
20^Q

**NAKED
SUSIE
FELDMAN**
PERKS
UP
THE
TWO
COREYS

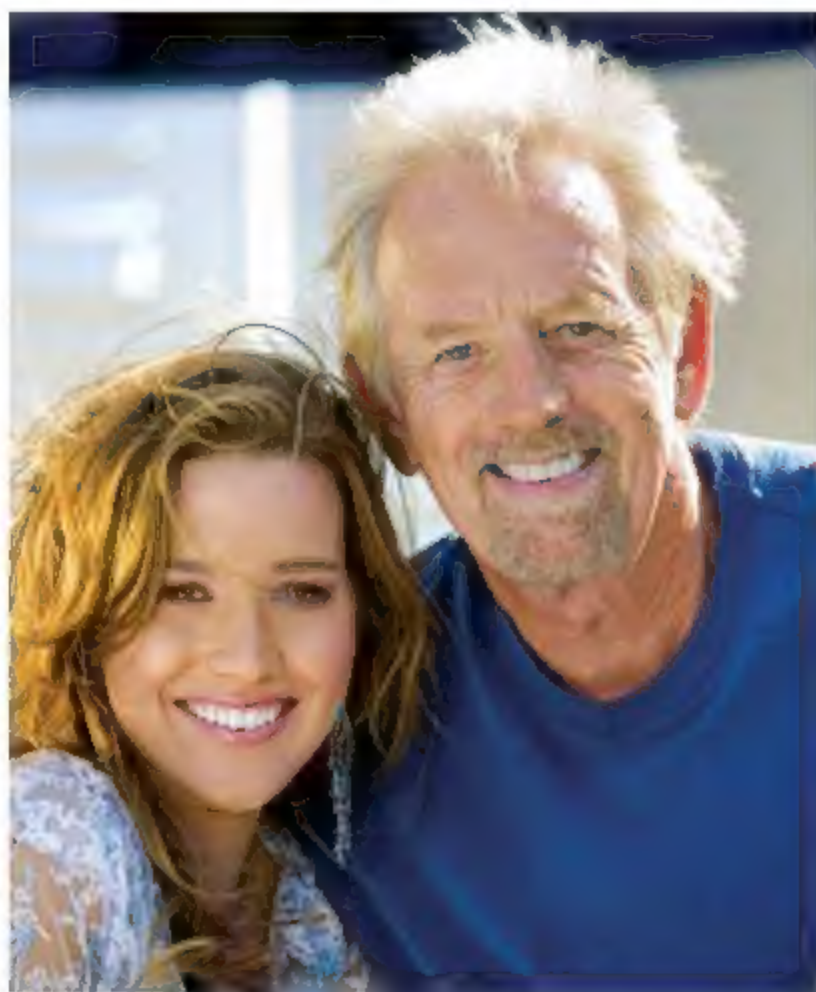
**THE WTA'S
ASHLEY
HARKLEROAD**
NUDE TENNIS, ANYONE?

INTERVIEW
THE
ELUSIVE **BEN
STILLER**

PLAYBOY
AND
THE
BIRTH
OF THE
COOL

**DENIS
JOHNSON'S
NEW NOIR
THRILLER
CONTINUES**





Ashley Harkleroad's midriff-baring debut at the 2001 U.S. Open caused the Georgia peach to be called an American Anna Kournikova, but it's her technique that's heating up the women's tennis circuit now. Currently ranked fourth in the country (and 61st in the world), Harkleroad is a tough competitor known for her pinpoint ground strokes and astonishing quickness. Off the court, she happily showed more than her midriff to Senior Contributing Photographer **Amy Freytag** for her nude pictorial, *Love, Ashley*. "I'm a little more muscular than some girls, but that's who I am," she says. "You don't have to be waif-thin and have huge boobs to be sexy." And what does she hope her competitors' response to her pictorial will be? "I hope they say, 'Whoa, Ashley does have a great body! Now we know why she's so fast.'"



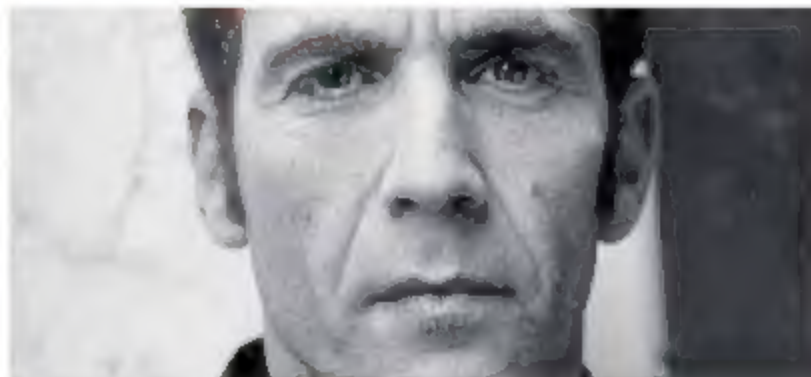
"It was exciting to run on the same track as the world's fastest man," says **Jonathan Littman**, the journalist who jump-started his research for *The Perfect Sprint* by running alongside athletes training for Olympic short-distance track events. During one of his more memorable runs, with gold medalist Jeremy Wariner in a graveyard in Waco, Texas, Littman even caught up to Wariner during a long workout. "I was very proud of myself," says Littman. "On Wariner's last interval, when he was winding down, I was able to keep pace with him...for about six minutes."



"The story is something almost beyond belief," says investigative reporter **Hillel Levin**. His feature, *The Strange Redemption of James Keene*, is a tale from the belly of the beast, the account of a drug dealer who, in exchange for an early release, agrees to be transferred to a maximum-security prison for the criminally insane to coerce a confession from a suspected serial killer. Levin is now expanding this piece into a book, in which he'll explore larger issues touched on in the article. "The book will raise questions about law enforcement's inability to deal with serial killers," says Levin. William Monahan, the Oscar-winning screenwriter of *The Departed*, is crafting a movie script based on this story for Paramount.



Versatile and prolific, **Bill Zehme** is one of the first people editors think of when they need a profile writer or interviewer. Fortunately for us, he's Playboy family: As co-author of *Hef's Little Black Book* and interviewer of the Man for our millennium issue, Zehme is beyond qualified to assess, in *The Birth of the Cool*, the magazine's cultural impact. "My own worldview of cool was completely shaped by peering into the magical pages of the magazine—especially getting a load of *Hef Life*—when I was a Chicago boy growing up in the 1960s," says Zehme. "I am probably, for what it's worth, the preeminent affectionate Hefnerologist striding the Earth—a fact Hef enjoys deeply."



Because **Ben Stiller** portrayed novelist-screenwriter **Jerry Stahl** in the film version of Stahl's memoir *Permanent Midnight*, we thought he would be the perfect guy to climb inside Stiller's head for the *Playboy Interview*. Good thought, but the logistics were tricky. "Ben has been prepping, producing, directing, acting in and cutting *Tropic Thunder*," says Stahl. "It was shot in Kauai with some minor talents like Tom Cruise, Robert Downey Jr., Matthew McConaughey, Jack Black, Nick Nolte and not a single woman—just a sprinkling of young Thai fellows in drag."

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Whether you lean blue or red, the parties' political conventions leave a lasting impression on voters before a presidential election. **PAUL SLANSKY** tests your memory of the conventions' most memorable quotes, flubs and follies.
- 92 THE PERFECT SPRINT**
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In this second installment of a gritty four-part modern noir written exclusively for PLAYBOY, National Book Award winner **DENIS JOHNSON** has the fugitive gambler Jimmy and his sexy new friend Anita on the lam. As they hide out and get to know each other intimately, Gambol, the bookie's collector whom Jimmy shot, nurses his wound and fantasizes about revenge.

the playboy forum

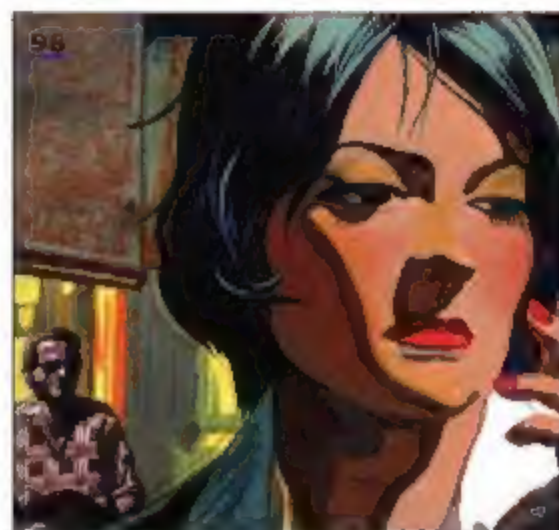
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President Bush has operated under the theory that he has been free to do as he wished since his election. Not so, says former Republican congressman **MICKEY EDWARDS**. The public, through its representatives, can and must check the executive. Too often presidents claim the people should be protected from the government, while they spend their time protecting the government from the people.

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- 90 SELMA BLAIR**
The actress who famously French-kissed Sarah Michelle Gellar in *Cruel Intentions* doesn't think she has an erotic bone in her body. We beg to differ. **STEPHEN REBELLO** chats up Hellboy's main flame about her offbeat roles and appeal.

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- 45 BEN STILLER**
Blockbusters like *Meet the Parents* and *There's Something About Mary* have made him one of Hollywood's most powerful multi-hyphenates. Now we reunite the star of this summer's *Tropic Thunder* with **JERRY STAHL**, whom Stiller portrayed in *Permanent Midnight*, to candidly discuss Stiller's on-screen humiliations, his casting Tom Cruise as a bald studio head and how not to house-train a dog.



COVER STORY

"Of all the athletes out there, I think women tennis players are the sexiest," says cover model Ashley Harkleroad. We couldn't agree more. Ashley's summer promises to be full of competition at its best, but her pictorial here may be the highlight of the season. Senior Contributing Photographer Arny Freytag finds Ashley ready to serve it up on our cover. Our Rabbit shadows her every move.



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BY JOSEPH DE ACETIS

this month on playboy.com

MAGAZINE BLOG

News, views and inside perspectives from PLAYBOY editors. playboy.com/blog

GARDEN FLOWERS

See the sexiest babes of Olive Garden. playboy.com/sex

COVERS UP

Hop through more than 50 years of cultural history in the PLAYBOY cover archive. playboy.com/magazine

THE 21ST QUESTION

One more quip from sexy Selma Blair. playboy.com/21q

RISEING STARS

Check out our archive of Playmates, Cyber Girls and models. playboy.com/risingstars



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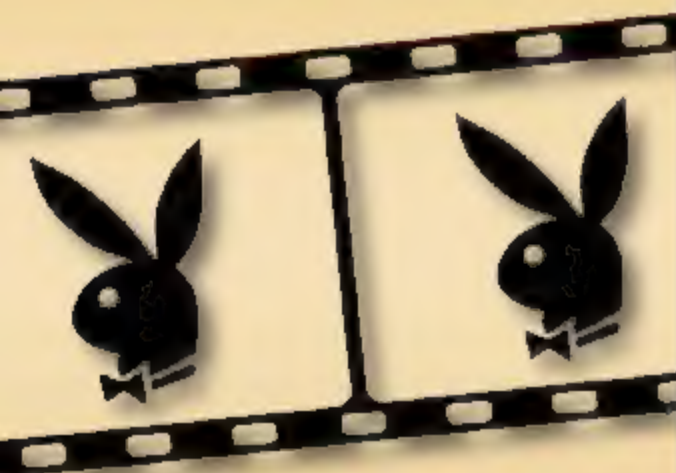
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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES



HEF'S BIRTHDAY WEEKEND

Mr. Playboy celebrated his 82nd birthday with his three best girls, Holly, Bridget and Kendra (left), at the Playboy Club Casino in Vegas. The marquee at the Palms was transformed into the world's largest birthday card (right) to celebrate the occasion. Pam Anderson surprised the birthday boy by delivering a cake to him in his suite, wearing nothing but high heels and a smile (below left and center). Photographer David LaChapelle and illusionist Criss Angel joined the celebration (below right).



THE HOUSE BUNNY SCREENING AT PMW

It was a very special movie night when Anna Faris (right and below far left) brought over a print of *The House Bunny* to screen for Hef and the girls. The film, which hits theaters in late August, stars Faris as a Bunny who moves out of the Playboy Mansion and into a sorority house to teach clueless coeds how to attract boys. Of course Hef and the girls steal a few scenes in the picture.



SPEND A YEAR WITH THE GIRLS NEXT DOOR

How would you like to wake up next to Holly, Bridget and Kendra each morning? You can: The titillating triumvirate is back with the steamy 2009 *Girls Next Door* calendar. Looks like it will be a very good year.



IN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE



Hef and the Girls Next Door were guests of honor at the Kentucky Derby in Louisville. (1) The weekend began with the Barnstable Brown Gala hosted by the Barnstable twins, March 1981 PLAYBOY cover girls. (2) Playboy favorite Bo Derek with the Man, posing for pictures. (3) In this corner: Lennox Lewis and Hef. (4) Later, luminaries like the Houston Texans' Will Dumps made their way to the Playboy Crown Royal party. (5) Idol Taylor Hicks with Cyber Girl Destiny White. (6) Titans Keith Bulluck and Vince Young with Miss January 2002 Nicole Narain. (7) The Bears' Robbie Gould with Playmates Pilar Lastra and Tyran Richard. (8) *Celebrity Circus*'s Joey Fatone with a bevy of Bunnies. (9) Joe Piscopo with Michael Jordan and Playmates. (10) The NFL's Byron Leftwich and Warrick Dunn. (11) At Churchill Downs the following afternoon, artist LeRoy Neiman hung with Bridget and Holly. (12) Patriot Randy Moss and Kendra. (13) Motown's Smokey Robinson with Chi-town's Hefner. For the record: Hef picked the derby winner, Big Brown. "I know a good thoroughbred when I see one," he said with a wink.



GLOBAL INFLUENCE

Thank you for a fascinating *Playboy Interview* with journalist Fareed Zakaria (May). He's right that the U.S. needs to embrace its immigrants as a source of strength. I am a college history instructor with students from Africa, Eastern Europe, China, Vietnam, Jordan, Egypt, India and Bangladesh. They have seen up close how a competitive election works, including how a candidate must explain in detail what he or she hopes to accomplish. They are observing how a multi-everything society works out its ethnic, religious, economic and cultural differences peacefully, if not always completely.



Zakaria on the "post-American" world.

These kids are our most effective ambassadors to the rest of the world. Excluding their energy, goodwill and potential will only hurt us in the end.

Thomas Maxim Guerin
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Zakaria argues that we should talk to rogue states such as Iran, but a successful negotiation requires both sides to act in good faith. As the Camp David and Oslo accords demonstrate, deals made with terrorists are worthless.

Brooks Mick
Yorktown, Virginia

As a right-wing libertarian, I find it refreshing to see the left has not run out of smart people who are willing to examine our problems with a critical eye. If the candor and good nature of Zakaria and others like him rub off on Washington, we will be better off.

Mark Millan
Cincinnati, Ohio

Zakaria berates economic "protectionism" as harmful to the economy, yet the U.S. and every other industrialized nation is a powerhouse thanks to the smart use of economic protectionism, not policies that open up our country to a corporate fire sale. Similarly, as the Iraq war drags on, Zakaria bemoans the Bush administration's "chest-pumping machismo" that tries "to convert people to nirvana" by "beating them up, humiliating and punishing them." He doesn't mention his role as a key early cheerleader for the war; he even attended a secret White House meeting in 2001 to help the administration craft arguments to justify the invasion. Zakaria's elitism is the type Americans are now rejecting at the polls.

David Sirota
Denver, Colorado

Sirota is the author of *The Uprising: An Unauthorized Tour of the Populist Revolt Scaring Wall Street & Washington*. In 2006 Zakaria told *The New York Times* he had thought the White House gathering was a "brainstorming session" and was not told it would result in an official report. He added that he routinely gives advice to policy makers and elected officials: "If a senator calls me up and asks me what we should do in Iraq, I'm happy to talk to him."

As a conservative, I never thought I would commend you on a political interview, but kudos to David Sheff. Zakaria's optimism is infectious.

Jason Maxwell
Charlotte, North Carolina

After we took/received the land from the natives, we used it to feed the world. After we built the bomb, we used it to protect the world. The most populated parts of the globe are only now at the point of the industrialization we went through a century ago and applying the farming techniques we developed decades ago. The most important question is, can the rest of the world build on our achievements?

Gene Phillip
Great Falls, Virginia

I'm happy to learn my favorite *Newsweek* columnist is so well-thought-of in many circles. Too bad he was born in India; he'd be a great president.

Bill Spore
Carlsbad, California

Zakaria's perspective as an immigrant should be read by anyone planning to vote in November. It's important for Americans to know there is fear in the

world, and the fear is of us. Our policies have isolated us. We must work to again be the light of the world.

Richard Dill
Knoxville, Tennessee

RUSSIAN UNDRRESSING

I love *The Women of Putin's Russia* (May). But when you compare the shot of Olga Kurbatova on the cover with the one on page 109, it's obvious her bra is a masterwork of modern engineering.

Barron Blackman
Raleigh, North Carolina

It's refreshing to see so many natural breasts in one place.

Norman Wells
Houston, Texas

My boyfriend and I love the Russians but would love to see more Asian women in the magazine. How about *The Women of Yasuo Fukuda's Japan*?

Nicole Turner
Muncie, Indiana

Your May issue arrived a week before I left for a trip to Moscow. How did you narrow it down to 16 women?



The Russians are coming—if you're lucky.

Every woman I saw was more beautiful than the one before. I was so distracted I nearly twisted my ankle several times on the cracked sidewalks.

D. Gorham
Houston, Texas

The women of Russia are gorgeous, yet I can't help but think we need to send more food to our comrades.

Dan Kingsley
Littleton, Colorado

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**BIG TALENT**

I was ecstatic to see *The Last Days of Chris Farley* in the May issue, as he is my favorite comedian. But when I shared my excitement with a girl I'm dating, her response was "Who?" Is her ignorance a deal breaker? I think so.

Austin Lewis
Athens, Georgia

Farley's tragic end demonstrates that even with millions of adoring fans you can still be living—lonely and empty—in a van down by the river.

Karen Fitzgerald
Tampa, Florida

Farley's childishness may have led to his death. His friends couldn't stay mad at him because it was as if he didn't know any better, no matter how many times they slapped his hand.

Joey Vosevich
St. Louis, Missouri

In 1989 my family saw a Second City show in Chicago. Soon we were breaking up over a young, heavyset cast member as he did backflips and crashed into tables. Farley was a comic genius. As Robert De Niro's character says in *A Bronx Tale*, "The saddest thing in life is wasted talent."

Robert Burke
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

A RIFF TOO FAR

I loved your 20Q with Bob Saget (May). However, the opening of the penis is not called the urethra but the urethral meatus. Now Bob knows.

Shawn Legge
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Some things should not be said, and when they are said they should not be repeated. Saget's "joke" about his daughter is not only disgusting but makes light of sexual assault.

Steve Young
Brandon, Missouri

HATING HILLARY

The venom Laura Kipnis unearths from right-wing Hillary Clinton biographies (*The Men Who Hate Hillary*, May) is no surprise to Clinton's many supporters. The only journalists who did not turn against her are Kipnis and Bill Moyers of PBS.

Jason Nall
Redland, Florida

Kipnis shows that a bright writer can be very entertaining and wrong, though she probably knows that. She certainly knows I cannot be ranked among the men who hate Hillary, for Hillary only makes me laugh. Kipnis does too, though I am laughing with

her, not at her. If this is typical of PLAYBOY's literary offerings, I need to renew my subscription, which lapsed sometime during the Cold War.

R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr.
Arlington, Virginia

Kipnis concludes by asserting that the allegedly unjustified dislike of Hillary by the right is mostly due to women playing too dominant a role in child rearing. No defense of Hillary is complete without some general feminist ranting.

Chuck Flournoy
Houston, Texas

TOTALLY HOT, FULL STOP

Army Freytag's photos of AJ Alexander are amazing (*All-American AJ*, May). I would love his job for a day.

Jeff Troutman
Reading, Pennsylvania



Clothespin omen: jeans going on, not off.

After serving up a groaner about how AJ's name, "like an expectant mother," has no periods, you show her wearing a name tag that reads AJ. If you're going to make that kind of error, keep it as far away from her breasts as possible.

Andy Wasylak
Lowell, Massachusetts

My husband and I have been subscribers for 10 years, and never has a Playmate been the topic of so much discussion. First a girlfriend mentioned how gorgeous AJ is, and not a day later my husband, who never comments about women to me (God love him), said she is by far the best Centerfold he has ever seen.

Rachell Horbenko
Chicago, Illinois

Read more feedback at playboy.com/blog.



PLAYBOY

a f t e r h o u r s

babe of the month

Cassandra Hepburn

DANIEL CRAIG, IF YOU'RE READING THIS...

Cassandra Hepburn may be a Bond girl. We're not saying she may play one someday—although she may—we're saying if we found out tomorrow she was a spy, we'd believe it. "I saw *Dr. No* when I was seven years old," she recalls in a smoky, mostly British accent. "I saw Ursula Andress and said, 'That's what I want to be.'" Her international-woman-of-mystery résumé is solid: Born in the Philippines, she grew up in Hong Kong, Switzerland and the U.K. and was living the nomadic life of a model when she decided to get serious about acting. In her first movie, *Time Lapse*, she played a lesbian hacker. "I've never had a real sex scene," she complains, "but in that film I fondle my roommate a bit." Next up: a pole dancer on *The Young and the Restless*. "There I was in my skivvies again," she says. "I get a lot of roles where I'm down to my skivvies." But the right people were starting to notice: When Eli Roth tells Quentin Tarantino to take a look at you, you're on a good path. That's how she ended up in *Hell Ride*, the neo-grind house biker flick produced by Q.T. Cassandra won't reveal any plot twists, saying only, "It's my first sexy-sexy role. The men will not be disappointed." She's also in *Surfer, Dude*, as Woody Harrelson's nine-months-pregnant Polynesian wife—her first ugly-ugly role, perhaps. "They had to put me in the ugly chair," she says. "I'd come out with makeup on and ratty hair, and Matthew McConaughey would look at me and say, 'Nope, still too pretty.'"



"I get a lot of roles where I'm down to my skivvies."

How to Improve Your Bat Speed

POWERFUL ADVICE FROM A PRO SLUGGER

Colorado Rockies third baseman Garrett Atkins is a career .300 batter, one of the heavy hitters on the second-most-pro-fec offense in the National League in 2007. We asked him for tips on swinging a bigger bat.

PLAYBOY: How can you increase bat speed?

ATKINS: Just take a lot of swings. I did it for years growing up. Pretty much every day my dad would pitch me 100 to 150 tennis balls. He'd stand about 35 to 40 feet away. The more you swing, the better your hand-eye coordination gets. It's a lot of repetition.

PLAYBOY: When you work out, what muscles should you target to increase bat speed?

ATKINS: Hand and wrist strength are important, obviously, but a lot of people forget that hitting is a total body motion. There's a lot of torque in a baseball swing. It's your core muscles. Overall body composition is critically important. Your arms and chest don't need to be huge, but everything has to be pretty strong and work in unison.

PLAYBOY: How can you improve your pitch recognition?

ATKINS: You have to be loose. If you're up there sitting on a fastball and trying to pull the ball every time, you're not going to be successful hitting the

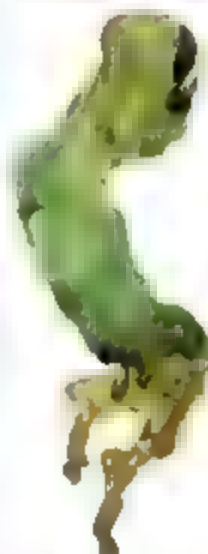


off-speed pitch. If a guy throws a lot of off-speed pitches, you've got to go with that and look for the fastball away that you can take to the opposite field.

PLAYBOY: Do chicks dig the long ball?

ATKINS: Absolutely. I definitely think they dig the long ball. I always get more text messages the morning after I hit a home run.

just beastly



Shel Silverstein Returns

First published in 1964, our late Uncle Shelby's *Don't Bump the Glump! and Other Fantasies* is back on shelves. It's a collection of poems about the Grissle Feezus and the fellow at left, the Scurm.

summertime clues

What She's Thinking Now

It's August—what is that girl friend wife/mistress of yours thinking? (Aside from the usual "Where's this relationship going?" stuff.) Can't help you there, mate. We pored over a stack of women's magazines, TiVo-ed *Oprah* and *Tyra* and even asked a couple of live females. Our findings:

The trendy girl drink she wants is not a mojito or a cosmopolitan. The summer's tastes of choice are actually throwbacks: iced tea and rose water. Scan the cocktail menu for tea combined with flavored vodka or rum and for rose water with gin or tequila.

Her odd new swimsuit is working wonders. Women's swimwear comes in two flavors: bikini and insecure. The suddenly popular third option, the cutaway, is designed to cover flaws while exposing curves. It also leaves some weird tan lines, although those can be prevented.

She's faking her tan and is proud of it. Great strides have been made in the science of artificial bronzing, and a good bronzing isn't cheap.

Yes, she looks like a Tokyo prostitute—that's the point. Used to be only Nancy Sinatra and Japanese babes could wear boots with a miniskirt or short shorts, but now the look is everywhere. The women wearing it know it's a bit slutty, they also know slutty drives us wild.

She wants to go away with you this weekend. Not that hanging around town is so awful, she just needs a story to tell her friends on Monday.

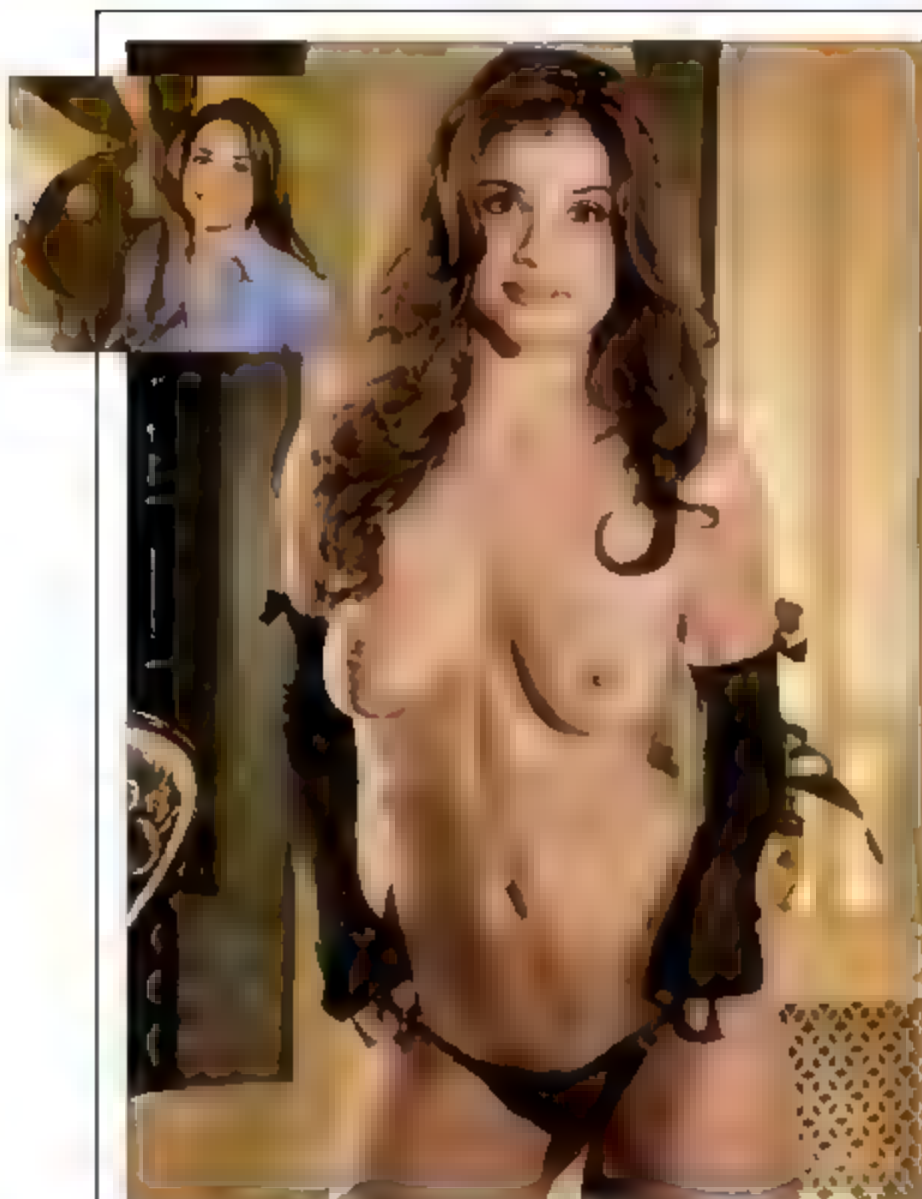
What's the most important thing?

Self-Serve Beer Tap: Invention of the Year?

YOU MAY SOON PULL YOUR OWN PINTS. SEEMS LIKE A MOSTLY GOOD IDEA TO US



Some things simply cannot be improved on, and drinking beer in a bar would seem to be one of them. A company called Table Tap disagrees. Coming, possibly, to a sports bar near you is the Table Tender, a self-service beer tap built into a table. It's not unlike pumping your own gas. A meter keeps track of how much brew you dispense, and you simply get a bill at the end of the night. **Pros:** No tipping, no jockeying for position at the bar, no vain gesticulating for the bartender's attention, no waiting on slow-footed barmaids. **Cons:** No banter with cute (if slow-footed) barmaids.



How to Get Into Magazines

Want to be the next Employee of the Month? Learn how to apply at playboy.com/pose

Gas for \$1 a Gallon?

What it is: the EFuel100 M croFueler. **What that is:** a machine that makes ethanol fuel for your car out of sugar. **Why it's cool:** It's a fuck-you to big oil. OPEC. Al Qaeda and al. the Bushes except Reggie. **Price tag:** \$9,995 for the unit, but your gas could cost a buck per gallon. **How that's so:** It takes 10 to 14 pounds of sugar plus other stuff, plus electricity, to make a gallon of ethanol. Although raw sugar sells for about 20 cents a pound, which would cost you \$2 to \$2.80 a gallon before you even start, the manufacturer describes an "industrial Mexican sugar" that costs just 2.5 cents a pound. **God bless:** industrial Mexicans.

Shark Summer

Sorry Stephen Colbert – the number one threat to America is not bears. This year is likely to be the worst in history for shark attacks, with early numbers rivaling those of 2001, the so-called year of the shark. That was when Volusia County, Florida, the shark-attack capital of the world, recorded 22 toothy attacks. Through early May of this year the area had already seen 11. In southern California a hysteria ensued when a great white fatally bit a triathlete just 150 yards from land. The sharkophiles at UnderwaterTamer.com are keeping tabs – consider scanning their news feed before you end up as so much turf in the surf.

Pop Went the 80s—Live

[illegible]

wear-it-well



How to Care for a Summer Suit

IN THE DOG DAYS OF AUGUST, DON'T LET YOUR BEST BRIGHTS GET THAT NOT-SO-FRESH FEELING

Linen wrinkles. Light colors stain. And you sweat under the hot sun. Keeping your summer suits in good shape isn't easy, but if anyone can do it's Jerry Pozniak. The managing director of high-end Manhattan cleaner Jeeves shares his tips for getting the most out of your cotton, light wool and linen.

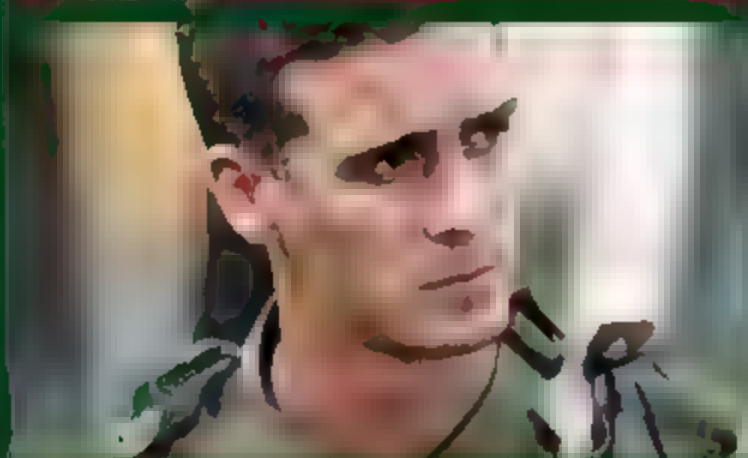
Wrinkles "You won't get them out of cotton or linen with steam. Spray your suit with sizing spray, which is like a starch but better. I recommend Niagara, then press the suit with a hot iron on a day that is not too humid or in an air-conditioned environment."

Stains "If a little Bordeaux lands in your lap, don't let the water anywhere near your linen with a napkin and club soda. The dye in linen is very fragile, and you'll take it off if you rub it with any liquid, even water. Just blot it and get it to a dry cleaner soon—the next day, if possible."

Splashes "You can splash white wine or a pale soda like ginger ale on a suit and not even know it until later, when it oxidizes and shows up as a brown stain. If you think you may have been splashed by Sprite, dry-clean the suit before wearing it again."

Odor "It's hot out, you're going to sweat, and your jacket will get a little funky in the pits. When you take it to the dry cleaner, specify that the underarms be deodorized. We use something like an industrial version of Febreze that has no scent. Febreze isn't bad if you want to do it at home, but avoid the stronger fragrances."

ultra marines



The Path to Peace?

JARHEADS JAWBONE ON GENERATION KILL

With *Generation Kill*, a miniseries about marines in Iraq, HBO presents an unflinching portrait of the war—and it's worlds away from *Band of Brothers*. Here's an unusual theory of international relations advanced by Corporal Ray Person (James Ransone):

"It's lack of pussy that fucks countries up. Lack of pussy is the root-fucking-cause of all global instability. If more hajjis were getting quality pussy, there'd be no reason for us to come over here and fuck them up like this, because a nut-busting hajji is a happy hajji. If you took the Republican Guard and comped their asses in Vegas for a weekend, no fucking war. If Saddam invested more in the pussy infrastructure of Iraq than he did on his fucking gay-ass army, then this country would be no more fucked up than, say, Mexico."



Man Food Delivered to Your Door: Texas Barbecue

In Driftwood, Texas, 30 minutes outside Austin, you'll find what some call the best barbecue in the state at a restaurant called the Salt Lick. Texas barbecue, for the uninitiated, is not the pulled pork they love in Virginia and North Carolina. This is cow country, cowboy, and meat means beef brisket. Order the family-style dinner at saltlickbbq.com; a hundred bucks will get you a brisket as big as a phone book, a rack of pork ribs and two lengths of pork and beef sausage. They say it serves eight to 10 people, but lay out plenty of sides (beans, coleslaw, a a-peño cheese bread if you can find it) and beer. Shiner Bock, Pear, Lone Star, and you may have enough grub for a bigger crowd than that. Garnish with Jerry Jeff Walker, Robert Earl Keen, Guy Clark and quite a bit of wine.

R E V I E W S

movie reviews

movie of the month

[THE DARK KNIGHT]

Batman finally gets serious

By Stephen Rebello



"When you've got a director like Christopher Nolan and you're surrounded by such great actors as Christian Bale, Heath Ledger, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Michael Caine, Gary Oldman and Morgan Freeman, plus you're in a franchise with a profound history—you don't want to be the one that sucks the most," says Aaron Eckhart, who in the new Batman epic *The Dark Knight* plays crusading district attorney Harvey Dent. Bat-fans know that Eckhart's character morphs into the villainous Two-Face and has a showdown with the psychopathic Joker (played by the late Ledger) that helps flip Dent over to the dark side. "Chris and his screenwriter brother Jonathan Nolan have taken the franchise in a serious psychological direction," says Eckhart. "Harvey Dent's motivation is justice after a terrible injustice. All the characters have something to say, and the actors took it really seriously. When I saw what Heath was doing with his character, I knew everybody on this movie had come to play. What a contribution to the film—it hit me. Wow, this is serious stuff." But for all its seriousness, the movie—which centers on Batman (Bale), police commissioner James Gordon (Oldman) and Dent's efforts to bring to justice the terrifyingly schizoid Joker—apparently plays like a wild thrill ride. "People will leave the theater limp," says Eckhart. "They're going to feel as though they were in a wind tunnel. The movie is full-on all the time."

"The movie is full-on all the time."

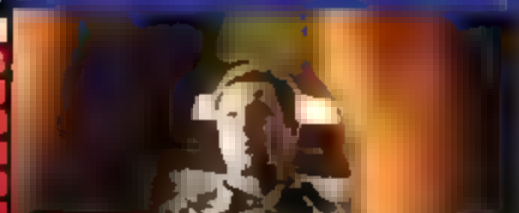
now showing

BUZZ

Towelhead

(Summer Bishil, Aaron Eckhart, Toni Collette, Maria Bello) This quiet hand grenade of a movie lobbed by Alan Ball (the creator of *Six Feet Under*) has a young Arab American girl dealing with racism, her own awakening sexuality, an overbearing father, a screwup of a mother and a bigoted Army reservist and pedophile.

Our call: Dark, troubling, often-times uncomfortable to watch but never exploitative, Ball's feature directorial debut offers a slew of terrific performances and unexpected jabs of humor.



The X-Files: I Want to Believe

(David Duchovny, Gillian Anderson, Amanda Peet) The second big-screen version of the popular TV series has FBI agents Scully and Mulder being reluctantly lured back into action. The duo investigates the abduction of a group of women that may involve a mysterious creature on a killing rampage in Virginia's rural hills.

Our call: The combustible screen chemistry between Duchovny and Anderson has worked before, so the addition of a "monster of the week"-type thriller plot promises to be scary good fun.



Tropic Thunder

(Ben Stiller, Jack Black, Robert Downey Jr.) Stiller directs and stars in this action-comedy send-up about self-absorbed actors shooting an epic war film in Southeast Asia. When local drug lords mistake the celebrities for DEA agents and attack, the actors become convinced they're in a real war and react like stars in battle.

Our call: We saw a screening of this outrageously funny and irreverent parody. Its undisputed jaw-dropper is the killer comic tour de force from a fearless Downey.



Pineapple Express

(Seth Rogen, James Franco, Rosé Perez) Comic genius Judd Apatow strikes again with this stoner-comedy, 1980s-style action flick featuring Rogen as a weed-loving process server who witnesses a murder, which lands him and his pot dealer Franco in the thick of a gang war involving a killer cop and a vicious drug lord.

Our call: Haters say the Apatow comic express is running out of steam, but we caught an early screening of this gut-buster—one of the most raucously funny movies of the year.



[21]

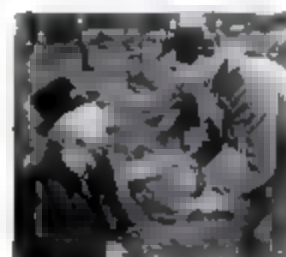
Luck runs out for six card-counting students when Sin City strikes back

When we excerpted Ben Mezrich's nonfiction best-seller *Bringing Down the House: The Inside Story of Six MIT Students Who Took Vegas for Millions*, in our November 2002 issue, we thought, Slick future flick. Sure enough, this adaptation features math geek turned card shark Jim Sturgess snogging it up with co-conspirator Kate Bosworth. Oddly, the movie's two trump cards—Kevin Spacey, as the math professor who masterminds the blackjack blitz, and Laurence Fishburne, who leads casino security—both fail to elevate the material. Still, the fetching young stars and melodramatic thrills leave you feeling ahead of the house. **Best extra:** "21: Virtual Blackjack" Blu-ray game. (BD) **★★★** —Greg Fagan



TYRONE POWER MATINEE IDOL COLLECTION Best known as a swashbuckler, Power also did romantic comedies. These 10 DVD debuts include the 1948 fantasy *Luck of the Irish* (pictured), as well as the 1940 crime saga *Johnny Apollo*. **Best extra:** Jayne Meadows' "Remembers" featurette. **★★½**

—Buzz McClain



SURFWISE The Simpsons seem normal compared with famed surfer "Doc" Paskowitz's nine wave-riding children, who struggled to assimilate into the real world after being raised in a camper. This is a fascinating, troubling documentary. **Best extra:** A look into Doc's "Five Pillars of Health." **★★★** —B.R.



STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES: SEASON TWO The 1967 season brought us tribbles and a world influenced by 1920s gangsters. The newly enhanced special effects are worth the upgrade. **Best extra:** Rare home movies. **★★★** —Bryan Reesman



THE COUNTERFEITERS This year's Oscar winner for best foreign film is a searing thriller about concentration-camp inmates forced by Nazis to produce counterfeit money. **Best extra:** Interviews with real-life counterfeiter Adolf Burger. **★★★½** —Matt Steigberg



THE WIRE: THE COMPLETE FIFTH SEASON The dozen or so story lines in HBO's Baltimore cop drama reach their conclusion in these installments. David Simon's creation still begs for a movie sequel. **Best extra:** Four-season retrospective. **★★★** —B.M.



[SLOPPY SECONDS]

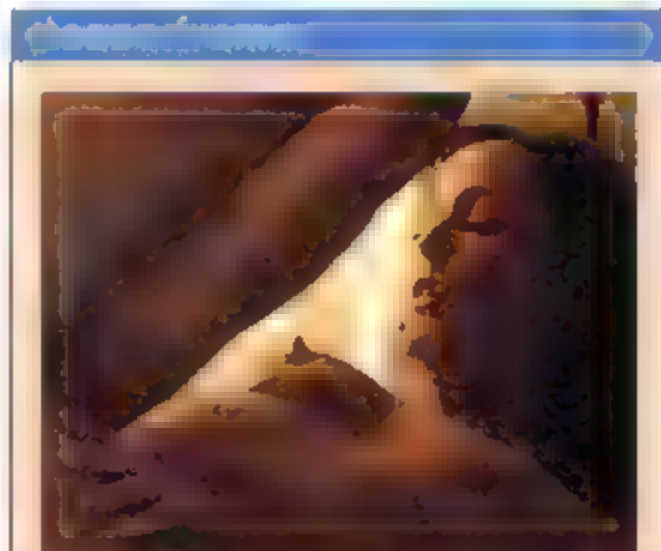
How many times do studios expect us to buy the same movies and TV shows on DVD?

Extended editions. Ultimate editions. Super-duper gift packs. Just when you think you've purchased the definitive DVD of your favorite movie, along comes another with a few more minutes of footage or some "newly discovered" bonus feature. For example, the "new" *Batman Begins* puts the 2005 film on DVD again in a gift set boasting bonuses like a "Batman-branded" 128 MB flash drive. Worth the upgrade? It's your call, depending on whether you bought any of the eight prior releases, including the wide-screen, full-frame, UMD and high-def iterations. But *Batman*'s no *Blade Runner*. After last year's spectacular rerelease, Ridley Scott's sci-fi classic ranks number one with 11 DVD versions, including two now-obsolete HD DVD packages. Such favorites find the studios sucking at the cult-collectibles test, double- and triple-dipping to take advantage of loyal film fans. That's why *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, *The*



Princess Bride and *The Evil Dead* (seven editions each) are among the most frequently "new and improved." Even *Alexander* has been brought forth on disc six times, thanks to Oliver Stone going back in for two director's cuts. If you were bummed that neither *Twin Peaks* set included the TV show's pilot, the studio answered your prayers with *Twin Peaks: The Definitive Gold Box Edition*. Yes, to get the pilot you must buy—again—the first two seasons, bundled with it. But double-dipping can also have a more practical purpose: The initial Blu-ray disc of *The Fifth Element* proved subpar and was superseded by a better version. In this case Sony stepped up and offered a free disc exchange for those who bought the bunk one, but don't go

looking for a handout when your favorite DVD is supplanted by a shiny new version with buy-me-please packaging. The only dipping you'll be doing is into your wallet. —G.F.



When the *X-Files* series ended, Gillian Anderson fleshed out edgier roles in indies like *Closure* (pictured). Now the rousing redhead is reuniting with David Duchovny in *The X-Files: I Want to Believe*.

[WONDER-TWIN POWERS]

Willie and Wynton's new blues collaboration is an unlikely pairing that works. What makes a duo click?

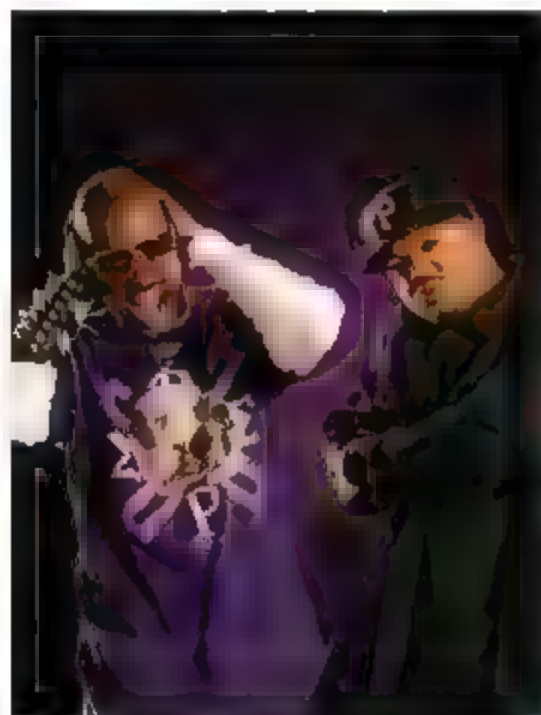
Most duets these days are just lazy attempts to cash in on industry contacts and famous friends or are misguided efforts to find a younger audience for an aging icon. But every once in a while—as with Willie Nelson and Wynton Marsalis on their new album, *Two Men With the Blues*—a pair of artists will hook up and make something sublime. Of course, on the surface a jazz great jamming with a country legend seems a bit, well, odd. But looking back at some other successful matchups shows that crossing genre lines is the

secret to success. Consider these examples: When Run-DMC and Aerosmith (1) remade “Walk This Way” together, it became the rappers’ biggest hit and brought the band back from the dead. Robert Plant and Alison Krauss (2) created the hauntingly beautiful album *Raising Sand* last year. Ben Folds backed William Shatner (4) on 2004’s wacky but wonderful *Has Been*. In 1977 David Bowie and Bing Crosby (5) crooned “Little Drummer Boy.” On “Miss Sarajevo” Luciano Pavarotti joined U2 (6) to surprisingly good effect.



[MADE MEN, MEMPHIS-STYLE]

Multiplatinum Three 6 Mafia—the first hip-hop group to perform at the Oscars—returns with *Last 2 Walk*



Given all its different projects, Memphis hip-hop duo Three 6 Mafia may be the most prolific rap act in the game today. In addition to making multiple platinum-selling records, DJ Paul and Juicy J have starred on their own reality show, produced their own clothing line, won a best song Oscar, and performed at Hef's 80th birthday party.

Q: The group has gone through a lot of members, and now you're a duo. Do you feel more pressure?

DJ Paul: No, it feels better, man. There's less pressure because we don't have to call anybody or wake up anybody or get them to the studio. It was hell over the years. That's why we named the album *Last 2 Walk*. We're the last ones standing. We survived all the pressure.

Q: Do you ever disagree about tracks?

DJ Paul: For us, it's all about what the

album needs. We'll write down all the different styles we've got and think, "What do our fans want to hear?" It's a process of elimination. If we already got a weed-smokin' or booty-shakin' song, we'll take another one off.

Q: You guys have done music, movies, and TV. What's left for you?

Juicy J: Probably lemonade stands at the Playboy Mansion. It's hot there. Lots of ladies, and you need to cool 'em off.

Q: You're Mansion regulars. What's the best thing about those parties?

DJ Paul: Of course my favorite is the ladies. If I had to get more specific, our favorites are the Girls Next Door. Then there's the women with the body paint—girls walking around butt naked and painted like a can of beer or something. I took some friends to the Mansion, and they didn't even realize the girls were naked until I told them. —Jason Newman

[MIND-BENDING FICTION]

Two novels investigate time travel and magic pills



Selden Edwards took 33 years to craft his debut novel, **The Little Book**, and the result is a work that feels effortless. Wheeler Burden slips from 1988 San Francisco to 1897 Vienna through "a dislocation in time." This is Vienna at its zenith, when it was a hub for the intellectual and artistic elite and the jewel of an empire on the brink of dissolution. Burden must not alter the course of human history, which proves challenging when he encounters a mysterious woman, a fellow time traveler and a cast of towering figures from the 20th century, including Sigmund Freud, who takes Burden on as a patient. Part mystery, part meditation on the marriage of past and present, part love letter to a bygone era, the novel moves fluidly through time and place, belying its three-decade creation.

Dirk Wittenborn's **Pharmakon** is a brooding novel about the search for happiness. William Friedrich, a psychology professor at Yale in the 1950s, believes he has discovered a drug that could put an end to human discontent. His efforts to become a star of pharmacology consume him, leading to a heinous crime that will color the rest of his life and may cost him his family. Friedrich's quixotic quest leads us from postwar America, where anxiety and depression are little understood, through the 1980s and the rise of the medicated masses, and it reminds us that too often the pain of existence is the point of existence. —Bryan Abrams



phantasm-of-the-month

Federico Fellini: The Book of Dreams is a visual chronicle of the great Italian movie director's 30 years of "night work." Filled with his brilliantly colored nightmares, it is a pageant of irrational desires and fears. The maestro prowls an apocalyptic cityscape, dodging flaming cars and toppling skyscrapers, when not finding solace with his familiar corpulent whores. ★★★

—Matt Steigbigel



[FREE GAMES FOR CHEAP BASTARDS]

(Charming spendthrifts also welcome)

Thanks to advancing internet technology the quarry of games that play directly in your web browser is increasing dramatically. These titles can be played on almost any computer, and most are free. Say hi to your boss for us, would you?

Portal 2D (kongregate.com) This fan-made 2D reinterpretation of Valve's smash hit *Portal* lets you abuse time

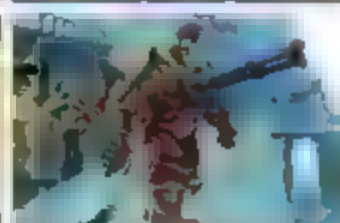
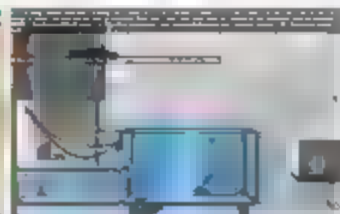
space and physics with a few mouse clicks. **Off-Road Velociraptor Safari** (raptorsafari.com) Drive through this off-road dinosaur hunting romp in full 3-D, dragging a ball and chain behind your jeep as you take down velociraptors amid stunt jumps. We still don't fully understand it, but that never

stopped us from playing *Katamari Damacy* (ikanam.org). As in PC hits like *Settlers* and *Civilization*, you start with a small plot of land, then either work with or screw

over your fellow island residents on the way to success. Simple to learn, addictive enough to ensnare your whole office.

Fallen Empire: Legions (instantaction.com) A first person shooter playing in a

browser? Sure, it isn't *Halo*, but *Fallen Empire* is a fabulous tension breaker if you're rocking a Windows machine or an Intel Mac. Elsewhere on Instant Action you'll find free multiplayer versions of such Xbox Live Arcade favorites as *Marble Blast*, *Screwjumper* and more. —Scott Stein



GUITAR HERO: ON TOUR (DS) Now you can take the hit music-game series on the road thanks to a nifty fret board that plugs into the bottom of your DS. Hold down the correct buttons and strum the touch screen to jam out. ★★★

—Scott Alexander



DON KING PRESENTS: PRIZEFIGHTER (360, Wii) We hate Don King but still hoped this game would challenge *Fight Night*'s throne. Unfortunately its gripping atmospherics are undone by magnitudinously horrendous controls. ★★

—Scott Jones



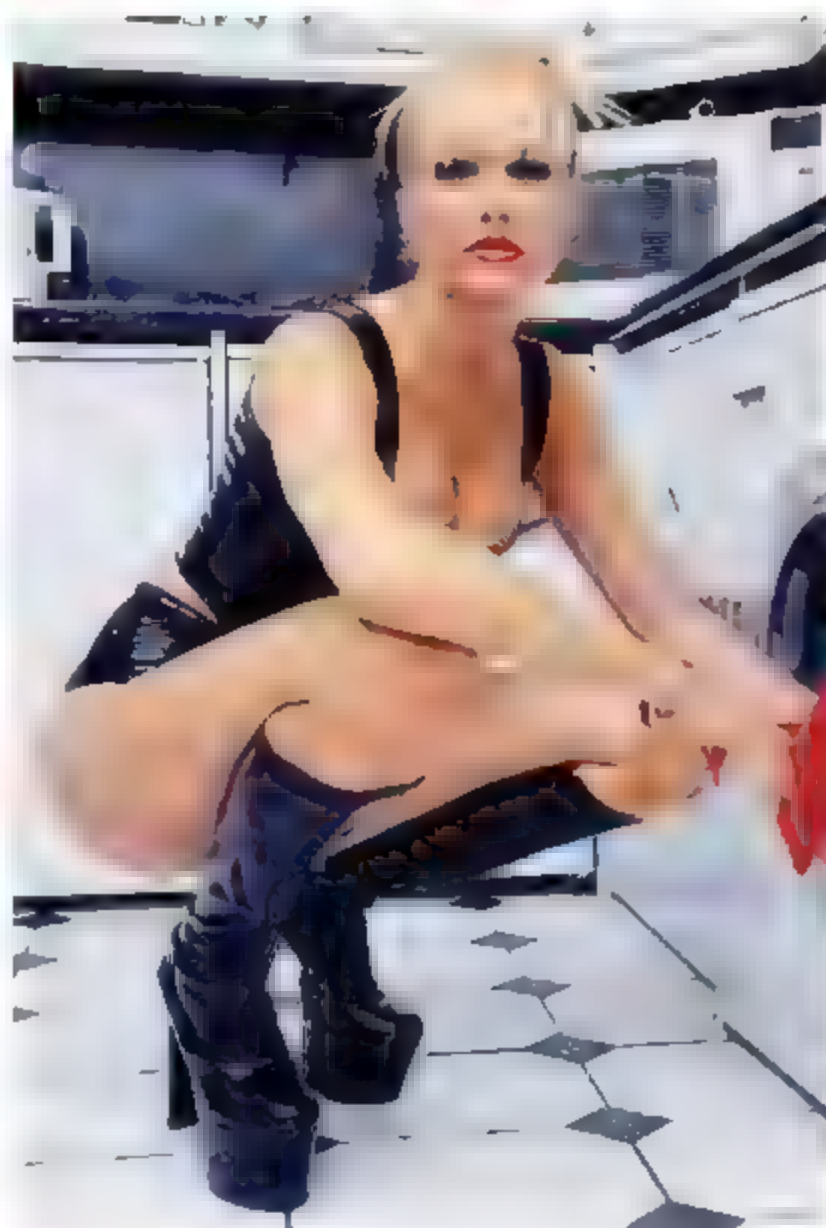
BATTLEFIELD: BAD COMPANY (360, PS3) Clichéd story aside, destructibility and sheer open-endedness win the day. We like it when the same problem can be solved with a speeding jeep, an artillery battery, a rocket launcher or a tank. ★★★½

—Scott Steinberg



RAW DATA

SIGNIFICANT, INSIGNIFICANT, STATS AND FACTS



Mrs. Clean

Getting married cuts a man's weekly housework by about 1 hour but increases a woman's by 7.



Shipload

If the global shipping industry, which consumes 2 billion barrels of oil annually, were considered a country, it would rank 7th in total carbon dioxide emissions.

Who, Us?

When asked to name their country's greatest enemy, 33% of new cadets at South Korea's Military Academy said North Korea, 34% said the United States.

The Colbert Bump

In the month after appearing on *The Colbert Report*, Democratic candidates for elective office saw a 44% boost in campaign donations. Republican candidates who were guests experienced no rise or a slight decrease.



Good Grief

The number of practitioners listed on ecopsychology.org who say they offer counseling to people who are obsessed with or feel guilty about their own carbon emissions' contribution to global warming: 149.

Color of Money

The hair color of the wives or companions of the 100 richest men on earth (none were redheads)

62% brunette
22% blonde
16% black

In Biz We Trust

Percentage of large U.S. corporations audited by the Internal Revenue Service in 1990: 72%. 2007: 26%.



For Science!

For a cognitive brain study, researchers at the University of Iowa offered volunteer stoners and boozers up to \$600 each to get stoned and/or drink booze.

TTYL, Dude

On average, men use 60 characters when texting each other; women use 80.

To the Victors

A college that wins an NCAA Division I football or basketball championship will see a 7% to 8% increase in applications for admission.



Lady Killers

Between 1991 and 2006, the overall number of hunters in the United States fell by 11%, but the number of female hunters ages 6 to 15 increased 50%.

what they're thinking



19% of the women polled in an Axe survey said they met their most recent boyfriend at a bar.

price-check

\$2.7 million

Price paid by Sheik Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum, son of Dubai's ruler, for a female camel at a desert festival in April.





Born-Again Beauty

On the track in the new Dodge Challenger SRT8

WHEN DODGE UNVEILED its Challenger concept car two years ago, we couldn't wait to get our hands on the production model. And here she finally is, a badass broad with big hips and a 425-hp 6-liter Hemi V8—good old-fashioned Detroit iron. Dodge stylists stashed a 1970 model in the studio for reference, and the influence is obvious. (If you don't remember the original Challenger, rent the highway epic *Vanishing Point* and crank the volume.) The 2009 Challenger SRT8 rolls into showrooms this month. We hustled a Challenger around California's Willow Springs Raceway, and for a two-ton car, this baby can boogie. With sharp steering input and scads of power (zero to 60 in 5.1 seconds), the Challenger runs like a scared dog. Impressive specs include a slick-shifting five-speed auto stick, enormous Brembo disc brakes, 20-inch alloy wheels and a top speed of 170 mph. Does the world need another Mopar car that can fly that fast at 13.1 miles a gallon? If this picture doesn't convince you, nothing will. (Dodge is also offering meeker versions with better mileage.) The SRT8 starts at about \$40,000; info at dodge.com. For more on our test-drive, see playboy.com/cars.



About Time

WORN BY FIGHTER pilots, astronauts and bomb-squad technicians, Bell & Ross watches typically focus on reliability and legibility, often in a style some consider blunt. What a pleasant surprise, then, to find among its new offerings this delightful (if all but unattainable) flight of fancy, the BR Instrument Minuteur Tourbillon (\$184,000, bellross.com), available in a limited run of 30. The priority is still time telling, but there's a delightful array of complications, including a tourbillon, an analog stopwatch, a separate seconds-counting dial and a power-reserve gauge.

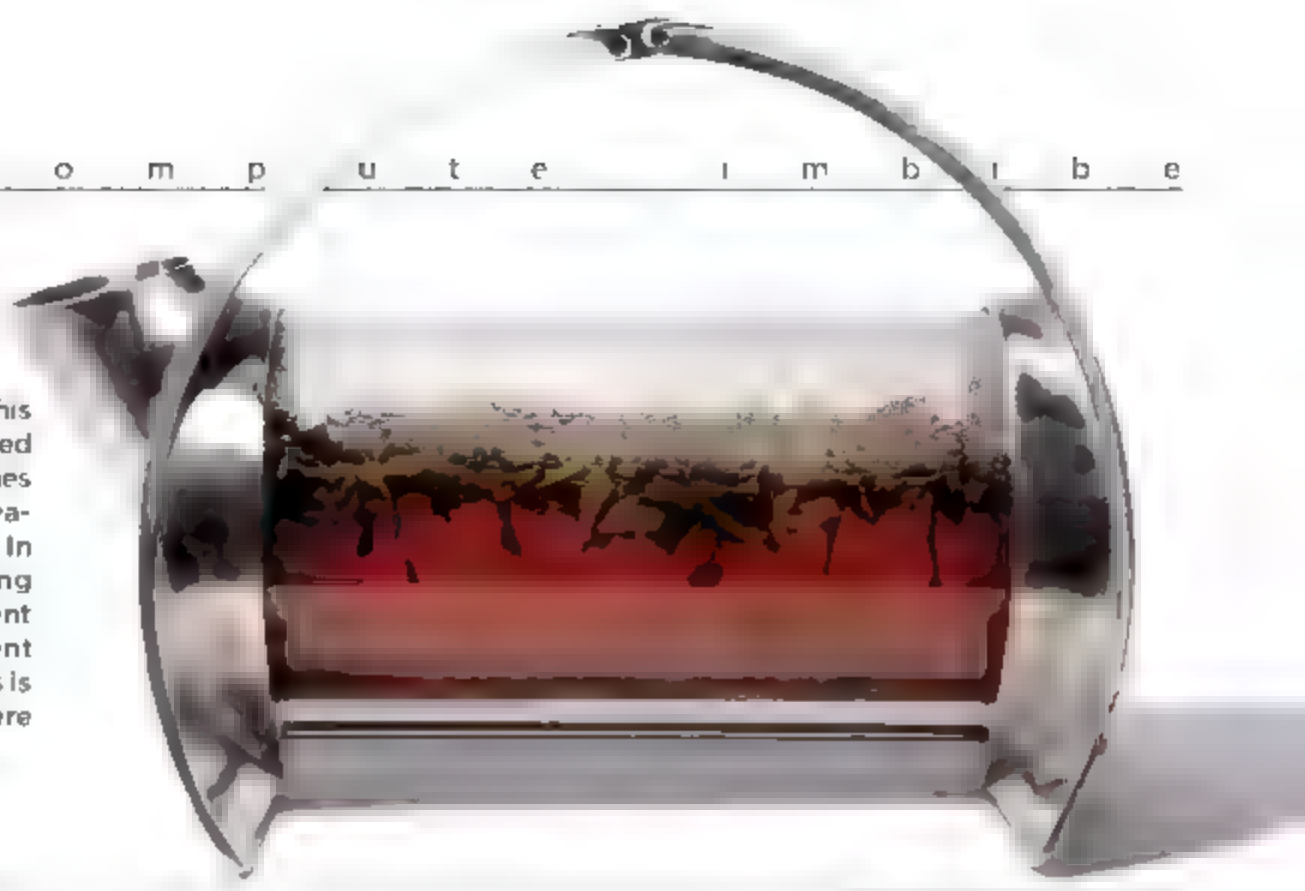
Small Talk

WE'VE BEEN FANS of Aliph's Jawbone headsets for years now, thanks to their combination of high style and industry-leading noise-reduction tech. Still they manage to improve. The new Jawbone (\$130, jawbone.com) is half the size of its forebears but nevertheless contains all the same high-test electronic guts.



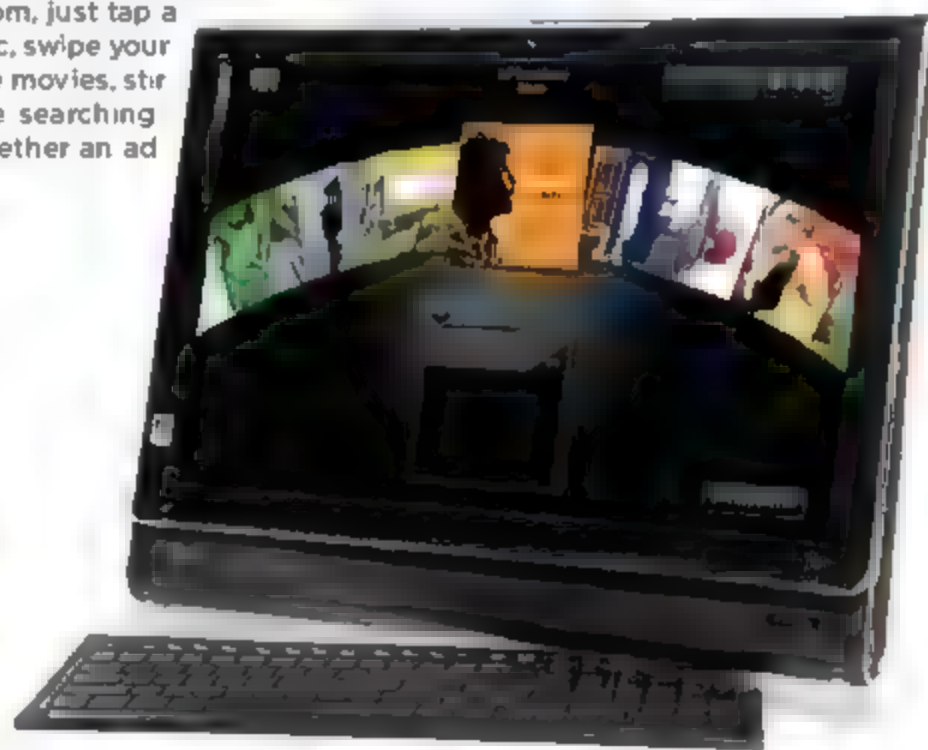
Get Your Oolong On

WHILE TAKING AN art course during his junior year in college, Joey Roth designed a teapot. Bloggers discovered his sketches online and fell in love, sparking an avalanche of inquiries and order requests. In a bold move, instead of sheepishly telling people the teapot didn't exist, he went ahead and created the adorably different Sorapot (\$200, sorapot.com). His success is a beacon for garage designers everywhere who have dreams of turning pro.



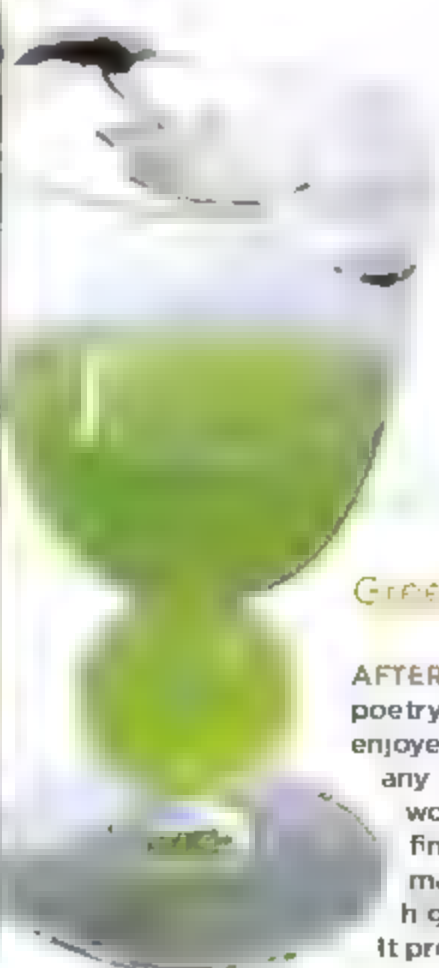
A Touching Display

ALL-NONE computers have been around for a while. So have touch screens. The real mystery is why we don't see them together more. Take HP's TouchSmart PC (\$1,600, hp.com). While you can work just fine with the included wireless keyboard and mouse, it's far more fun to stash those primitive tools in a drawer and use the TouchSmart as your personal info kiosk. Whether you're in the kitchen or the living room, just tap a piece of cover art to hear music, swipe your way through photos and home movies, stir up some YouTube or Google searching, then let your friends drag together an ad hoc party mix. Feels good.



Green Scare

AFTER BEING BLAMED for everything from madness and suicide to awful poetry, absinthe was outlawed in most places by the early 1900s. It has enjoyed a romantic and dangerous reputation ever since. Remind you of any rock stars? Marilyn Manson has long been a fan of the anise-and-wormwood scapegoat, so much so that he has spent the past few years fine-tuning his own brand with a Swiss distiller. Called Mansinthe (\$56, mansinthe.com), it's the real deal, which means real wormwood and a high thujone (the reviled psychoactive chemical in wormwood) content. It probably won't drive you insane, but all the same, stay off the poetry.



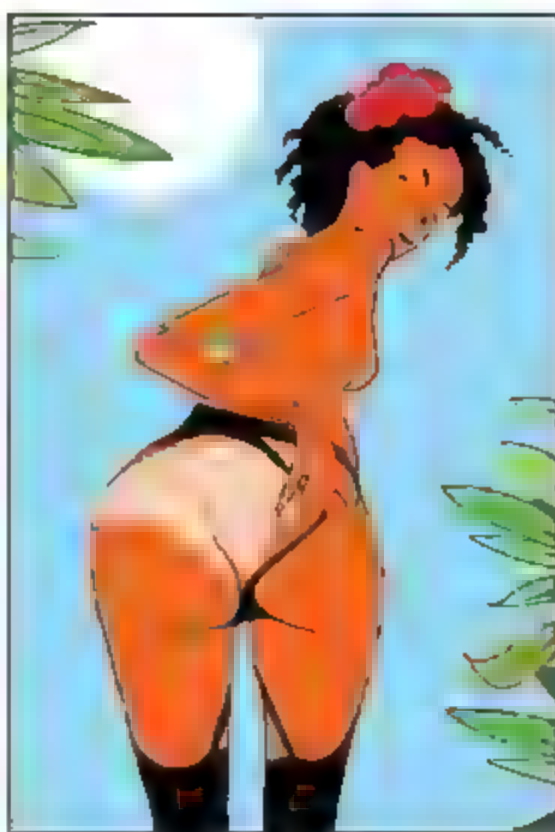
The Playboy Advisor

Every time I read about a famous person like Max Mosley, president of the motor-racing organization FIA, having a sado-masochistic sex orgy, I wonder how pain is related to pleasure. I let my husband spank me because it turns him on, but it does nothing for me. It seems counterintuitive that pain can bring pleasure. Is there a physiological reason for this, or is it all psychological? Why are these two sensations connected?—L.M., Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

How many celebrity S&M orgies have you read about? Your husband isn't necessarily into pain; it's more likely he enjoys dominating you while you are in a vulnerable and embarrassing position—over his knee (we presume), your panties around your ankles, a naughty girl learning her lesson. He's aroused despite your indifference, so imagine if you followed the advice of spanking enthusiasts online: When he gives you a "perfect" slap, you could say "Thank you, sir!" He may come then and there. The pleasure many women get from being spanked lies in ceding control. There is a type of freedom and certainly less responsibility in being a submissive. (This can work both ways. Have you tried spanking your husband? Report back to us.) Some men hedge their bets by slipping a finger under their partner to play with her clit; the more aroused a person is, the more pain he or she can endure. Some psychologists assume anyone into "erotic pain" must have been spanked or abused as a child. While that may explain some people's interest, most algolagnatics are no different from people who focus solely on pleasure. They wonder about the shifting boundaries between pleasure and pain themselves; as John and Libby Warren ask in *The Loving Dominant*, can a sensation be considered pain if you don't try to avoid it? That we perceive pain in both positive and negative ways can be seen in a submissive who endures a spanking or flogging but may still complain the straps are too tight. (If good pain ever turns bad, the partners should have a safe word to end the scene.) Consider other times when pain is pleasurable, such as runners feeling a high, aerobics fiends insisting it "hurts so good" and hot-pepper lovers craving the burn—all are buzzed on natural painkillers known as endorphins.

Is it possible to salvage an e-mail address that has been compromised by spam? My filter catches the majority of it, but I still have to delete 30 messages every day.—D.S., Tallahassee, Florida

Unfortunately, no. Because spammers don't delete addresses that bounce, even if you were to shutter an e-mail account for years, you would still hear from the widows of African finance ministers, cut-rate mortgage lenders and penis-enlargement witch doctors as soon as you reopened it. Set up a filter so messages marked as spam are sent to a junk folder, which you can scan occasionally for false positives. Google's Gmail does this by default. Any-



thing sent to its spam folder is deleted after 30 days so you don't have to bother. Ask your provider if it will kill e-mails that closely resemble typical spam before they reach you. "I'm sure I miss some legitimate e-mail that way, but it's a price I'm willing to pay," says Randy Cassingham of spamprimer.com. If you decide to make a fresh start, set up two new e-mail addresses: one you guard with your life and another for public posts, online shopping and to give to anyone you don't know well. Also, never respond to a spammer's offer to unsubscribe—that only confirms you read spam and makes your address more valuable.

I would love to have my wife join me and perform for a webcam in a private session with a cam girl. My wife may not like the fact that I sometimes masturbate this way. Is there any way to convince her to do this?—R.C., Tallahassee, Florida

We are trying to imagine how you will ask her, let alone convince her. Masturbating while secretly interacting with a live nude girl who's not your wife sounds like trouble to us.

I have a friend who has herpes but still has unprotected sex. She told me she doesn't tell the men she sleeps with, because she doesn't want them to spread rumors about her. That's nothing to admire, but I decided it's not my business. However, a mutual male friend is interested in dating her, and I'm not sure what to do. How can I stop her from infecting others without ruining our friendship?—N.C., Madison, Wisconsin

You can't stop her, but you also aren't a hall monitor who needs to police your friends' sex lives. Your male friend risks picking up an STD during any encounter with a casual partner; it's his responsibility to take precautions. (For

all you know, he already has genital herpes. About 20 percent of teenagers and adults do, and 90 percent of those infected aren't aware of it.) Of course your female friend should tell her partners she is infected, just as she would want to be informed about any STDs she is exposed to. But again: not your affair.

What is the difference between champagne and sparkling wine? The number of bubbles?—J.M., Dallas, Texas

The number of lawyers. Under French law the only sparkling wine that can be called champagne is produced with grapes grown in the Champagne region of France. The Champenois have been battling for global recognition of this distinction for years. For example, earlier this year Belgian authorities destroyed 7,200 bottles of imported bubbly because their "California Champagne" label violated a European Union trade agreement over the use of the word. Another agreement prevents the Swiss village of Champagne from putting its name on local vintages. The French note with irritation that while the EU last year banned "Napa Valley" from appearing on the label of any wine that doesn't originate in Napa Valley, California, the U.S. forbids producers to use 17 geographic label designations such as champagne, port and sherry only on wines introduced after March 2006. As a result, the Champenois say, about half the sparkling wines sold here as champagne (mostly the cheaper stuff) are mislabeled.

A reader complained in May that he had lost his erection a couple of times with new partners, even though he is only 20. I am 28 and have the same problem. I go soft or can't get an erection with new partners and occasionally in a relationship. Now if a first date is going well, I secretly take a Viagra as we have dessert. I find this gives me both the confidence to perform and harder erections. The problem is, once we've gone out a few times and I stop taking Viagra, my dates often remark that my erections are less firm and question why I am not as excited. What do you think of using Viagra to overcome first-date anxiety and gain harder erections? Do you see any long-term consequences of my using the drug at a relatively young age?—J.L., Miami, Florida

This side effect of Viagra and similar pills is something you don't read about on the labels. They create a standard you can't maintain without the drug. A study released last year found the more often young men take erectile-dysfunction drugs recreationally, the less confidence they have in their ability to get hard without them. If you feel you must pop a pill during a first date, perhaps go with a quarter or half dose to provide a kick start rather than a missile launch. But in the long term you're better off without them. If you have trouble with a new partner, explain what's going on.

You're anxious about pleasing her, the hardness of your erection isn't a reliable indicator of how much a man is enjoying himself, no guy stays rock hard from first touch to orgasm, and while your thrusting skills are first-rate, your real talent is cunnilingus.

As a lawyer who wears white or blue dress shirts with navy or black suits, I find ties are my only outlet for color and creativity (I have collected more than 300). It seems the skinny ones popular in the 1980s—the ones that make guys look like giant insects—are coming back. I don't want to be out of fashion, but I also don't want to buy a bunch of new ties. Should I just ride this out and continue wearing the classic ties from my closet?—S.B., Tucson, Arizona

First, we would clean out your closet; 300 ties is far too many to manage. It's better to own fewer that are of better quality. That said, you can't so easily dismiss the return of skinny ties, because it reflects a trend in men's suits toward thinner lapels. However, this is a young man's game; they are going with skinnier ties because they don't want to look like older lawyers. This doesn't mean you look dated or should change your style. But even standard ties are getting thinner, dropping from four inches or three and three-fourths inches to three and a half. Picking up a few of these ties will help you look current without slipping into trendy.

I am a 21-year-old woman who loves the *Advisor*. There has been some discussion about whether a man can "slip" into a woman's anus during doggy-style vaginal intercourse. A reader in May claimed it could not happen easily, but it has happened to me three times. The first time, my boyfriend slipped up; I was so wet I couldn't tell if he meant to do it. The second time, I felt he was just being lazy, thrusting too hard without focus. The third time, I collapsed in agony. I explained to him that he wouldn't want a foreign object unexpectedly thrust into his butt. It hasn't happened since, but it took a long time for me to trust him again in bed.—A.K., Gainesville, Florida

As a woman, let me speak for the unlubricated asses and say this can happen. Too many drinks and rapid-fire rear-entry sex led to the one and only mishap I felt was going to send me to the emergency room or the morgue. Prior to that I was fairly open to anal. Now that I know what it feels like unlubed, full-entry and full force, that orifice remains for egress only.—A.W., Columbus, Ohio

I had a slippage issue. I was drunk at the time and thrusting a bit too hard, and it went into her ass all the way. Thankfully, I was well lubricated from her vagina. Had she been an anal virgin it might have made more of an impression.—P.B., Thousand Oaks, California

Thank you, everyone, for sharing your penetrating—sorry—insights. This is a good time

*to remind adventurous readers that anal sex, while lots of fun, does not occur with the ease of entry you see in porn; unlike the vagina, the anus has no natural lubrication. "Lots of men are going at it and think, 'I'm just going to stick it in,'" says Tristan Taormino, author of *The Ultimate Guide to Anal Sex for Women*. "But it takes preparation; you can't get to dick in one night. Start with a finger, have an awesome orgasm and build from there." Many people find they are happy to stop at the finger, including men, who can be sent to new heights with a friendly prostate massage. Some men even enjoy being penetrated with a butt plug or dildo. Don't worry, you won't turn gay. If that's all it took to cross over, there would be millions more homosexuals.*

My 28-year-old boyfriend talks to his mom on the phone daily, sometimes several times a day. She also buys most of his clothes (including underwear) and home furnishings. I've never before dated a man who was this close to his mother. Should I be concerned I'm involved with a mama's boy?—B.H., Denton, Texas

This is the worst kind of threesome. The relationship will continue only as long as you are willing to date them both. We would expect a man to be far more independent by this age.

I have a set of speakers in oak cabinets. The cone on one woofer has a hole. Should I have it patched or reconed? The cones are original and have been patched once already. I'm afraid reconing with newer materials will affect the sound quality.—D.B., Raleigh, North Carolina

*We understand your devotion, but it's hard not to improve on the sound quality of a speaker with a hole in it. Reconing isn't expensive; expect to pay about \$50 a speaker from services such as *Simply Speakers* (simplyspeakers.com, 800-511-3343). Owner Sean Ryan has seen it all during his nearly 20 years of reconing, including customers who "fixed" holes with tissue paper, tape, nail polish and/or glue. You can buy DIY kits for larger studio speakers, but balancing the cone and keeping it free of dust during the process are challenges best left to the pros. You should also inspect the foam that holds the cone in place; in many speakers it starts to crumble after 10 or 15 years, causing the cone to fall off-center and creating distortion and a lack of bass response at lower frequencies. In most cases you can make this fix yourself on both speakers for less than \$30.*

I have a fabulously hot new girlfriend who plans to handcuff me, surround me with four laptops playing porn and work me until I explode. But then she read in the May column that this is known as "fluffing." Well, she's a Montana ranch chick, and Montana ranch chicks don't fluff. I'm terrified she will bail on the idea. Please give me another term, quick—make one up if you have to.—D.B., Missoula, Montana

Your girlfriend isn't a fluffer; she's a samit. Fluffing is an old-school porn term for women who worked behind the scenes to get an actor

hard before he went on camera. So technically, unless your girlfriend gets you erect and leaves you to masturbate to climax while watching your surround-sound porn, she's not a fluffer. She's definitely not a fluffer if she gets off too.

In May you wrote that the only secure method to destroy data on a hard drive is incineration or a sledgehammer, but that is incorrect. As an IT pro with 10 years of experience, I recommend a method called zero fill. Every drive manufacturer provides a utility to do this.—S.L., St. Louis, Missouri

Zero fill will do the trick for most people, but it's not infallible. It wouldn't be cheap or fast, but an all-star forensics team could, in theory, recover data. That can't be done on a drive that no longer exists. Besides, who doesn't like to smash and burn stuff?

I work at Starbucks. A customer comes in all the time who used to chat me up, but he's too old for me and not that good-looking. We have another customer who is an exotic supermodel type with perfect chocolate skin, about 19 years old, the prettiest woman I've ever seen. I started to see them together—happy, affectionate romantic. Now I'm going nuts, wondering why I was such a jerk to the guy, why I didn't let him ask me out, wishing he were my boyfriend instead of the supermodel's. I don't usually obsess, but I can't get him out of my head. What's wrong with me?—L.S., Seattle, Washington

You're human. Because we often take cues about the attractiveness of a person based on his or her perceived value to others, this is bound to happen once in a while. In fact, the effect has been directly observed in mice: Female mice prefer males who carry the scent of another female, i.e., he must not be a total loser if another female has mated with him. Other research suggests couples tend to have the same level of attractiveness; when they don't, we suspect money or power makes up the difference or our judgment is off and we missed something. This may explain why so many guys feel the only time women are interested in them is when they already have a girlfriend or wife, although this effect has also been attributed to guys appearing more confident when they aren't trying to get laid. Anyway, the lesson here is to give a man a chance even if you aren't instantly smitten. The frustrated nice guys who write us every month would appreciate it.

*All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereotypes and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented in these pages each month. Write the *Playboy Advisor*, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or send e-mail by visiting our website at playboyadvisor.com. Our greatest-hits collection, *Dear Playboy Advisor*, is available in bookstores and online.*



THE PLAYBOY FORUM

FORTRESS WASHINGTON

BY MICKEY EDWARDS

If the men who wrote the American Constitution were to revisit the nation they created, they would be shocked at what they found. Today, instead of protecting the people from the government—the system the founders designed—the government is increasingly trying to protect itself from the people.

Consider how things have changed. Two hundred and twenty-one years ago, harassed and bullied by their own king, America's founders turned the entire concept of government upside down. In Europe, indeed in most of the world, models of governance were eerily similar: Simply put, there were rulers, and there were subjects; rulers ruled and subjects obeyed, even to the point of marching off to die in wars in which they had no interest, no voice, and no choice. Of all the strange new ideas the founders proposed, the most stunning was their determination that Americans would be citizens, not subjects.

The change was profound because rulers tell their subjects what to do, but citizens, at least theoretically, tell their government what to do. This was "power to the people" long before 1960s radicals uttered the words. This new system of self-government, in which the self actually mattered, was the true basis of American exceptionalism.

But the whole enterprise—call it the freedom enterprise—rested on adherence to a few fundamental concepts that are today increasingly ignored or deliberately violated. To make such a radical system of self-government work, the founders carefully drafted a revolutionary constitution that would give their new government the necessary authority to act on important public matters but also contained clear limits on what it could do—including a partial but specific list of citizen rights immune from government intrusion—and divided the newly granted powers into a multitude of hands (three branches of the federal government, separate, independent and equal, and a further division of authority between the national government and the states, which retained considerable portions of their earlier sovereignty). As for federal decision making, almost every major power held by European kings—the decision to go to war, the

spending power, the taxing power, the judge-confirming power, the treaty-approving power—was deliberately withheld from the office of the president and given to the people themselves, to be exercised through their representatives.

That was then. Recently that important liberty-protecting assignment of authority has been set aside. In one of the most notable illustrations, White House press secretary Dana Perino attempted in March to dismiss claims that the Bush administration was ignoring the American people's sentiments about the war in Iraq by arguing that the people do have a chance to be heard—every four years. In other words, once

elected, a president is free to do as he or she will. Perino was wrong, of course (the people speak not only every two years in congressional elections but every day, through their elected representatives), but this attitude (supported for the first six years of Bush's presidency by congressional Republicans) has led to the great threat to the very nature of American government posed by the current president.

How has this administration undertaken to protect the government from the people? By claiming that the executive branch—which includes not only the White House but all federal bureaus, agencies and departments—is largely immune from direction by the people's Congress and not answerable to it. Here are three examples.

Constitutional scholars have responded with alarm to President Bush's use of "signing statements" to declare his right to decide whether or not he will obey the law, a practice both the American Bar Association and the non-partisan Constitution Project have condemned as unconstitutional. The threat to our constitutional system is that by disregarding the law and proclaiming himself the sole decider in a "unitary" executive branch, Bush has declared that Congress cannot tell any federal agency what to do even when Congress creates federal programs and appropriates money to run them. A Government Accountability Office study found agencies were in fact defying the law in a potentially large number of cases.

The second example came in 2000 after the administration



MYTHICAL FREEDOM

fired a number of U.S. attorneys. Empowered to determine whether laws had been broken or new laws were needed, Congress last year asked Harriet Miers, the president's former legal counsel, and Josh Bolton, his chief of staff, to testify before the House Judiciary Committee. They refused. They were then subpoenaed to testify. They refused to obey the subpoena and were cited for contempt of Congress. The attorney general declared that the Justice Department (part of the "unitary executive") would not enforce Congress's contempt citation. The White House claimed Miers and Bolton were immune from questioning by the people (for that's what Congress is) on the grounds of "executive privilege," a legal tenet that applies only when the president is involved in the conversation. Miers, Bolton and the president himself all said he was not.

The third example flows from the government's gathering of confidential information—telephone conversations and records, online viewing habits, etc.—from citizens and noncitizens alike, as part of the administration's Homeland Security program. It obtained this information by demanding that corporate executives turn over their customers' private records, in violation of privacy and other laws. When news of the government's actions leaked, the companies were faced with the possibility that their customers would sue them, and the administration feared the companies might thereafter refuse to cave to government threats. In response, the administration insisted that Congress grant retroactive "immunity" from lawsuits to the companies that had complied with the illegal demands. On the face of it, this was to be immunity for private companies. In fact, however, granting such protection would in effect give carte blanche to the government to continue to make such demands without the companies' facing any consequences, thereby protecting the government from the risk that its demands would be refused.

In a short time Americans will go to the polls to select a new president. It is essential that all the candidates—Democrat, Republican, Green and Libertarian but especially John McCain as the nominee of President Bush's party—be asked forthrightly whether they believe government should be protected from the people or, as the founders intended, the people be protected from an overzealous government. That is the single most important question facing the nation as we move further into the 21st century.

Mickey Edwards, the author of Reclaiming Conservatism, is a former eight-term Republican congressman from Oklahoma.



By Daniel Howe

Our national mythology celebrates the freedom of 19th century Americans. Did Americans then enjoy more freedom than we do today? It's a complex question. Then, most Americans earned their living through agriculture. Owning land was a sign of a man's freedom and dignity, and land ownership was more widespread in the United States than in most other countries. Frontiermen could sometimes get a free homestead and select its site on the public domain, but if they wanted to locate near a river or railroad so they could market their crops, they probably had to pay for their farm. American farmers were free of the feudal dues to local lords and the tithes to an established church that many of their European counterparts paid. They felt free and took pride in their freedom, but theirs was a freedom to work hard. Society was not relaxed or hedonistic. Life was dirty, laborious and uncomfortable.

Before the Civil War full freedom was for white men only. African Americans could be held in slavery and treated as property: bought, sold, rented, bequeathed, mortgaged and insured like any other property. The minority of free black people enjoyed only limited liberty, seldom being

allowed to vote. Few colleges admitted women, and no state allowed them to vote until after the Civil War. The man was the head of the household. His wife was expected to subordinate her wishes to his; if she earned money, it belonged to him.

If freedom from taxes is a form of personal freedom, then the absence of income tax and sales tax must weigh in favor of 19th century liberty. Having less revenue, the federal government was much less intrusive. Businesses, for example, did not have to comply with regulations on working conditions, discrimination in hiring or the quality of their products. This left employers with more liberty. On the other hand, employees had less liberty to join labor unions, which were illegal in most states, and had little recourse if they were hurt on the job.

Technological innovation has enhanced the quality of our lives and, in particular our personal freedom. Developments in communications, beginning with the electric telegraph and cheap newspapers and culminating in the Internet, have freed us from the limitations of time and space. They foster knowledge of the wider world and broaden our horizons. They provide political information and encourage democratic participation.

Improved transportation enhances our freedom to travel—to vacation in distant destinations, for example. More important, it broadens our freedom to work, since we can choose jobs farther away from our homes. Visiting the United States in 1833, a French engineer named Michel Chevalier said the freedom to travel is essential to economic opportunity in a democracy.

Most important of all, economic development has created many different kinds of jobs. Think how many of us are now employed in some aspect of making or using computers. No longer dependent on agriculture, we are freer to match our occupation with our talents and interests. Since we work shorter hours, we enjoy more free time.

Certainly we are all much freer to express our sexuality today than people were in the 19th century, especially if they were gay. No longer do laws against miscegenation prevent us from marrying people of another race. Not only are we freer to marry, we are much freer to dissolve our marriages. A divorce no longer requires a special act of the state legislature.

A major factor limiting liberty in antebellum America was mob violence. Then as

now Americans legally enjoyed complete freedom of religion and exercised it by joining a multitude of different churches; however, this freedom was sometimes curtailed by mobs that attacked believers in unpopular religions such as Mormonism and Catholicism. Mobs also attacked unpopular ethnic groups like Native Americans, Irish Americans and African Americans. (All too often the latter two groups also fought each other.) Finally, mobs attacked people with unpopular opinions, notably those who

wanted to abolish slavery or those they suspected of crimes. As a result, legal liberties, including free speech and the right to a fair trial, were severely compromised by mobs the authorities either lacked the means or the will to control. When police forces finally formed, starting in Boston in 1838, they were created more as a way to control mobs than to fight crimes by individuals. Surprising as it

may seem, police departments fostered the liberty of the citizenry.

All in all I think we are much freer today

Daniel Howe won a 2008 Pulitzer Prize in history for his book What Hath God Wrought.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WAS SOMETIMES CURTAILED BY MOBS

WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT: A Q&A WITH DANIEL HOWE

PLAYBOY: How do communications advances in our time compare with changes wrought by the telegraph?

HOWE: The Internet is for our generation what the electric telegraph was for the 19th century: a revolution in communications. There's was actually unprecedented and more drastic than ours. The telegraph probably lowered the cost of business transactions even more than the Internet does, and it certainly seemed to contemporaries an even more dramatic innovation. For thousands of years messages had been limited by the speed with which messengers could travel and the distance eyes could see signals like flags or smoke. Neither Alexander the Great nor Benjamin Franklin, America's first postmaster general, knew anything faster than a galloping horse. With the telegraph, instant long-distance communication became possible for the first time. Commercial application of Samuel Morse's invention followed quickly. American farmers and planters—most Americans then earned their living through agriculture—increasingly produced food and fiber for far-off markets. Their merchants and bankers welcomed the chance to get news of distant prices and credit. The electric telegraph solved commercial problems and at the same time had huge political consequences. The telegraph, along with improvements in printing, led to the enormous growth of news-

papers, which in turn facilitated the development of mass political parties. The telegraph had many of the same effects in the 19th century that the Internet is having today: speeding up and enabling commerce, decoupling communication from travel, fostering globalization and encouraging democratic participation. The czar of Russia worried about the democratic implications of the telegraph just as the rulers of China worry today about the Internet.

PLAYBOY: What was the most surprising thing you learned while working on this project?

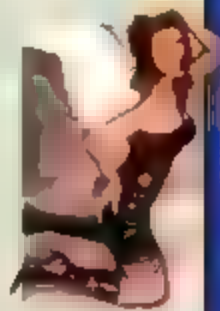
HOWE: Before I wrote this book I had never really grasped how often improvements in material terms fostered improvements in moral terms. This surprised me, but it was well understood by the people of the antebellum era. Those who encouraged economic diversification and development in many cases also supported more humane laws, wider access to education, a halt to the expansion of slavery and even, sometimes, greater equality for women. The two heroes of my story, John Quincy Adams and Abraham Lincoln, both illustrate this. The economic development they wanted to promote empowered the average person in all kinds of ways. In today's third world, improvements in living standards should similarly encourage democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights, especially the rights of women.



MARGINALIA

FROM A PLEDGE

by Belgian activist Tania Derveaux to have sex with any virgin who tangibly helps defend Net neutrality: "I'm using sex in a positive way to spread awareness. The reason why only virgins can apply is... I don't want to make this promise to such a large amount of people that I'll have to turn some down. Net neutrality is paramount to safeguard free speech and innovation on the Internet. With only one arguably negative side effect: An unusual amount of today's Internet users are virgins. That's a problem I intend to solve. In history, man has always waged war for freedom. Now it's time to obtain our freedom with love. Sex is all over the Net, and yet it's still a big taboo for many. Using sex to spread awareness will be yet another big step to sexual freedom. This is just another great example of what's possible thanks to Net neutrality."



FROM AN EXPLANATION

by jewelry supplier Michael Toback concerning the phenomenon of new mothers asking their husbands for gifts, or "push presents," for giving birth, from the *New York Times* article "A Bundle of Joy Isn't Enough?": "You know, Honey, you wanted this child as much as I did. So I want this."

FROM AN INTERVIEW

on Salon.com with philosopher Ken Wilber, here answering questions on the conflict between science and religion: "Science has pretty thoroughly dismantled the mythic religions. But virtually all the great religions themselves recognize the difference between 'exoteric,' or outer religion and esoteric, or inner religion. Inner religion tends to be more contemplative and mystical and experiential and less cognitive and conceptual. Science is actually sympathetic with the contemplative traditions in terms of its methodology."

FROM A CLARIFICATION

by Sel Olving, head of an association of Norway's top advertising agencies on the spirit of a Scandinavian ban on



sexual images in advertising: "Naked people are wonderful of course, but they have to be relevant to the product. You could have a naked person advertising shower gel or a cream, but not a woman in a bikini draped across a car. We're not that puritan that you can't have naked bodies. But it has to be done in the right way, with charm and passion."

(continued on page 43)

READER RESPONSE

LIBERAL BAITING

Is Eric Alterman's article ("Why We Loathe Liberals") in the May 2008 *Forum* supposed to constitute meaningful political discourse? I couldn't tell. One thing that annoys me is the manner—the all-pervasive sarcasm, the insulting, venomous language—in which he belittles those who may disagree with him before they can even respond to his charges. Another annoyance is the way Alterman seems to be simply ranting to like-minded individuals who already agree with his thesis. I am extraordinarily disappointed with *PLAYBOY*'s lapse of journalistic integrity in publishing such irresponsible work.

Geoffrey Colman
Manhattan Beach, California

I applaud you for the May *Forum*, especially the essay by Eric Alterman. Although I was grinding my teeth as I began the article, I ended it with a smile and a chuckle. It is also refresh-



Liberals: Who needs them?

ing to see libertarian ideals being introduced to the mainstream. In Robert Levine's "The Grand Old (Independent) Party" I am proud to have this month's issue on my coffee table.

Shawn Krewer
Abrams, Wisconsin

LIVE FREE OR DIE

Kudos to Hef and *PLAYBOY* for giving space to the Libertarian Party. In a world where the media hate us—I don't know why; I think we make sense—Hef has the balls to shed some light on our party. But then he has always had big balls in the way he has a weed up the ass of convention and the status quo. Our party has many members who, like Hef, are leaders in a world of followers. Most people think we are a bunch of



Another sensible idea from Libertarians

crackpots and idiots, but then character assassination is encouraged by the Republocrats. Could they be worried the American public may have enough sense to listen to us? The old two-party system has devolved into a corrupt, bloated waste of taxpayer money and become an insult to the collective intelligence of our nation. I could go on and on about the merits of the Libertarian Party, but I urge all freethinking individuals to see for themselves. I have been a member for some 15 years, and I refuse to give up or compromise my ideals in the face of yet another ridiculous election. Visit lp.org, or call 800-ELECT-US and draw your own conclusions. Who knows? You just may learn something I know I did.

Byron Reeves
Keithville, Louisiana

BLACK AND WHITE AND RED ALL OVER

I love Susan Jacoby's editorial regarding this country's lack of readers ("Zero-Narrative Nation," April). A friend of mine owns a small bookstore named Prospero's Books in Kansas City, Missouri. The shop's logo is the word READ on a static-filled TV screen, and one of its mottos is a quote from Joseph Brodsky: "There are worse crimes than burning books. One of them is not reading them." Last year, dismayed that he was unable to give away books he no longer had room for (many were best sellers) and to call attention to the scarcity of readers in the United States, the owner held a book burning that made international headlines.

Jeffrey Fuller
Portland, Oregon

Jacoby expresses everything I've feared about the computer age and what we're losing because of it—with our consent, it seems. I encounter people all the time who, when asked if they've read a certain book or heard of certain authors, respond with strange, puzzled looks. It's apparent that books are becoming passe and that, like our proudly uninformed president, many Americans prefer to get their information in tiny bites rather than obtain it through methods that achieve lasting results—and maybe result in knowledge as well. Don't crack open a book, for God's sake; you might learn something new. To quote in part from your last line, thanks to the instant-info society we live in we may be heading toward having "no culture at all."

Ron Thuemler
Tampa, Florida

I'm writing to commiserate with Jacoby. Every time I encounter someone in the workplace I am reminded of just how much we have failed to properly educate United States citizens in the fundamentals of communication.



New forms of "literacy" leave us vulnerable

reading, writing, speaking and listening. The time is long overdue for us to get back to the basics of a fully functional education system.

Joe Biack
Cleveland, Ohio

Jacoby hits the nail on the head. I've always felt out entering the computer age was both a blessing and a curse. By the way, I'd have e-mailed you this letter, but I don't have a computer.

Bill Iglehart
Plantation, Florida

E-mail via the web at letters.playboy.com. Or write: 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

NEWSFRONT



Trash Talking

LONDON—The British Olympic Association is playing a gag order on its athletes. "British athletes will have to sign a contract promising not to comment on any politically sensitive issues," according to a spokesman for the body. Violators will be barred from events and sent home. Critics are drawing parallels to a 1938 soccer match before which the English national team agreed to line up and perform a Nazi salute at the Berlin Olympic Stadium. "The British Olympic Association's squalid attempt to suppress legitimate criticism of the Chinese regime by British athletes is a timely wake-up call for all of us who thought sucking up to dictators was something we had left behind in the 1950s," wrote David Mellor, a columnist for the U.K. *Daily Mail*.

Am I Shot or Not?

LOS ANGELES—A private company has set up an online forum to assess the quality of police behavior. The website's mission statement reads, "Prior to the launch of RateMyCop.com, people had no way to provide feedback about officers who are being paid by tax dollars. It is the hope of the site's founders that citizens and departments alike will use this powerful tool as a way of monitoring police performance." Founder Gino Sesto requested names and badge numbers of nonundercover police from across the country and compiled the publicly available data on the website, where users can rate their experiences with individual officers. Despite such high-profile incidents as the shooting by NYPD officers of unarmed Sean Bell on his wedding day and the surfacing of a video of Philadelphia cops kicking and beating suspects, police groups have complained the forum allows the public to unfairly malign officers. Now the site is having trouble finding web-hosting services.

Here, There and Underwear

ARLINGTON, OREGON—Carmen Kontur-Gronquist, the former mayor of this tiny Columbia River town, has filed a lawsuit alleging fraud in the recall vote that ousted her earlier this year. The referendum was triggered by complaints about bra and pantie shots the 42-year-old single mayor posted of herself on her MySpace page in an effort to improve her social life. "Those photos have nothing to do with my abilities as mayor," Kontur-Gronquist said at the time of the complaints. She narrowly lost the vote, 142 to 139, and now alleges that mail-in bal-

lots from several of her supporters were purposely not delivered in time for the vote.

Pom-Pom Bomb

MUMBAI—To increase the entertainment at cricket matches in the top-level Indian Premier League, promoters have brought in cheerleaders, including some from the Washington Redskins pep squad. Although many groups, including Bollywood and the National Commission for Women, support the league, the junior interior minister of the state of Maharashtra, of which Mumbai



is the capital, has called the cheerleaders obscene. "We live in India, where womanhood is worshipped," Siddharam Mhetre says. "How can anything obscene like this be allowed?" Local police have also threatened to fine organizers if officers feel the cheerleading is vulgar.

Poll Tax

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Supreme Court has upheld an Indiana law mandating that citizens produce state-issued photo ID before being allowed to vote, despite noting that the state has never suffered from the type of fraud the law is intended to combat. Justice John Paul Stevens, while agreeing with the majority, wrote, "The record contains no evidence of any such fraud actually occurring in Indiana at any time in its history."

MARGINALIA

(continued from page 41.)

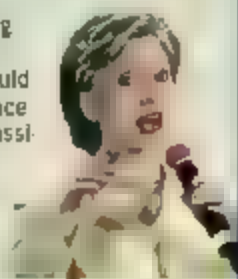
FROM AN EDITORIAL on thetrumpet.com by Brad MacDonald: "The problems of the 20th century 'new morality' haven't just intensified; new forms of sexual freedom have been thrust into the mainstream."



New depths of degradation have been reached. Since 1981 the most alarming and dangerous onslaught has been the emergence and widespread acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle into main-

stream society. Nothing illustrates this better than the Day of Silence. Tomorrow hundreds of thousands of adolescents from more than 6,000 schools across America will refuse to speak—some all day and others for partial periods—to protest the alleged harassment of and prejudice and discrimination against students who identify themselves as homosexual, bisexual or transgender. Classes across America will descend into disarray as impertinent youth flash cards explaining their rebellious refusal to speak. Like the broader homosexual movement, the Day of Silence is an attack on God. It's also the highest form of hypocrisy. In defending homosexuals from bullying and discrimination, participants—many of whom will wield posters and admittedly be outspoken in their commemoration of the day—will be bullying and discriminating against those students who have traditional, conservative views. Schools are supposed to be places of learning, not sanctuaries of homosexual indoctrination.

FROM AN ESSAY by Gary Younge on Hillary Clinton's cynical use of race politics in her campaign, published in *The Guardian*: "Assuming that African Americans could not possibly work out that white supremacy was not in their interests by themselves, their detractors routinely accused them of acting under influences both foreign and malign. The FBI wasted millions of dollars and hours trying in vain to prove that Martin Luther King was a communist for those who would not know their place and were not assassinated, the punishment was often the revocation of whatever rights of citizenship they had. Already denied the vote, freedom of movement and association, Paul Robeson was refused a passport in 1950 and confined to the U.S. When his lawyers asked why, they were told that his frequent criticism of the treatment of blacks in the United States should not be aired in foreign countries. In 1963 the intellectual and activist W.E.B. DuBois was similarly grounded without passport privileges and so moved to the recently liberated Ghana."



PLAYBOY INTERVIEW:

BEN STILLER

A candid conversation with Hollywood's comic power player about the pressures of being funny, growing up in showbiz and the perks of success

It's an understatement to say *Tropic Thunder* is one of the season's most eagerly awaited pictures. What the film offers Tim Cruise as a bald, overweight, ruthless studio executive and Robert Downey Jr. as an African American plus Mother McConaughey, Jack Black, Nick Nolte and, by the way, very few women unless you count a bunch of men in drag? Nor is it surprising that the movie's director and star is Ben Stiller, the bent comic mind behind some memorable hit comedies, from *Zoolander* to *Meet the Parents* to *Dodgeball*. What is unusual is Stiller's ascension to the top ranks of Hollywood power players—on the screen (where he's a top box-office draw) behind the camera (as director and writer) and as a producer who owns a thriving production company and already puts together his own film funds, invests his money and hires a new crop of rising actors. No other New York name from the third-most-powerful studio in Hollywood after Walt Smith and Johnny Depp.

Of course, even *New York* admits Stiller's prominence on its power list was "the biggest surprise of all." Comedians rarely get that kind of respect in the entertainment industry. In show business it pays to look at the bottom line. His *Meet the Parents* movies took in \$847 million worldwide. *Night at the*

Museum grossed \$574 million. *There's Something About Mary* pulled in a hefty \$370 million. Stiller, 42, is also one of the most reliable comedy commodities around, playing cameos in numerous movies, music videos and sitcoms and bringing an extra creative twist to the talk-show circuit.

Stiller, whose parents are the famous comedy team Stiller and Meara, was born and raised in New York City and backstage at his parents' TV shows. Growing up, he made Super 8 films with his sister, actress Amy Stiller, and made his professional acting debut when he was nine, as a guest on one of his mother's TV series. His breakout (and famously sticky) role in *There's Something About Mary* launched him to stardom.

He has dated Jeanne Tripplehorn, Janeane Garofalo and Amanda Peet, and married actress Christine Taylor, with whom he has since appeared in *Zoolander* and *Dodgeball* in 2000. The couple, who live in the Hollywood Hills, have two children.

PLAYBOY caught up with Stiller soon after *Tropic Thunder* was completed. To get a fresh perspective, we tapped Jerry Stahl, a contributor to the magazine who has not only worked with Stiller in the past but actually been portrayed by him in an adaptation of Stahl's book *Permanent Midnight*. Here's his report:

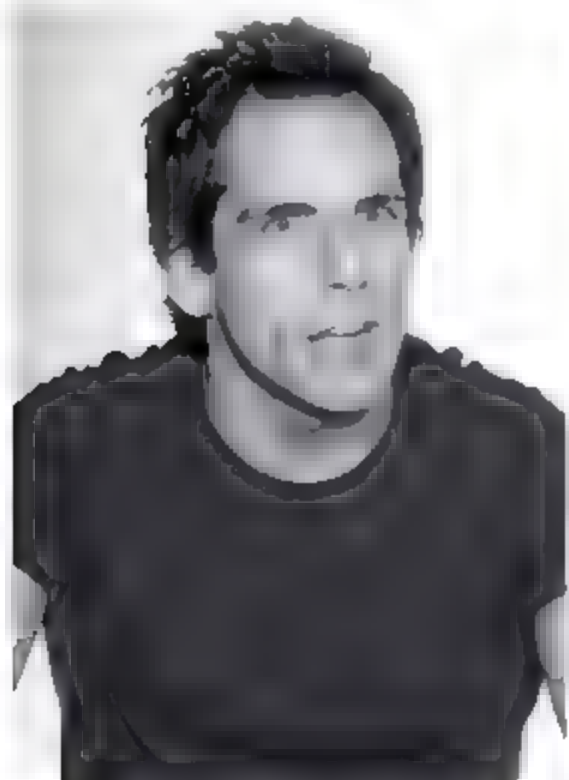
"When I met Ben for the first time, he was standing in his kitchen, stretching his legs to give me a look at the other foot. I asked him he endured earlier in the day. His dentist, it seems, had open Ben's lip, leaving a puncture that would shut out a peg tooth. It's great to stick a tooth in it after the procedure, but he there mysteriously fell out.

"I asked if he had been given pain killers, and Ben responded, 'You know, I can't take them.' He reminded me of an evening years ago when in the name of research for a film about an L.A. dope fiend—that would be me—Ben consumed a slightly heartier than recommended dose of Vicodin and puked all over Vermont Avenue and my boots.

"Since then I've been best man at his wedding, and he has been my most trusted confidant. It's thick out of friendship.

"Some of these interviews are conducted in his house, but some took place as Ben test-drove an Audi R8 around downtown Los Angeles. Not only was he able to answer questions about the car, he let his hair down on the floor. Even though Ben barely dodged a couple of pedestrians, he never dodged a question."

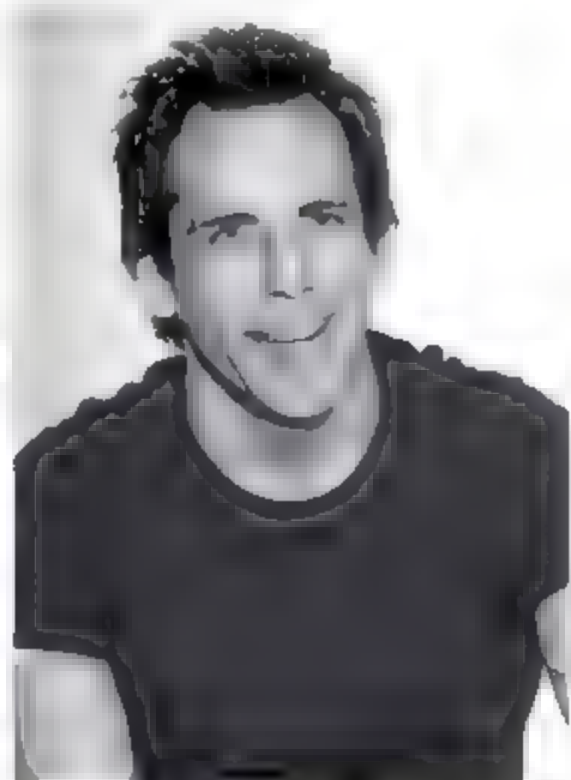
PLAYBOY: In *Speedman*, the character you play in *Tropic Thunder*, is a movie star whose dream is to break away from the



"I'm not a great auditioner. I freeze. For me it's very tough to go into a room full of strangers. I remember I really bombed the audition for the *Ralph Macchio* role in *My Cousin Vinny*. I had a few callbacks, but I blew it."



"I admire actors who have a plan. I wasn't one of them. Looking back, the great part about starting out is you don't have people assessing who or what you are. Nobody's analyzing your work, because nobody cares."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIZUNO

"People would rather dwell on somebody else's problems than look at their own. Do I want to pick up a copy of *U.S. News & World Report* or grab *Us Weekly*? If I'm in a checkout line, I'll take the one with the big pictures."

kind of role that made him famous. Is the movie autobiographical?

STILLER: Tug's an action hero. As an actor he's forced to do the same movie called *Simple Jack* over and over again. I wouldn't say that was accidental. And he's so committed to his character he's slightly delusional. He thinks he's always in a movie.

PLAYBOY: Is that a familiar feeling for you?

STILLER: Look at the actors you connect with over the years. When you see some characters, you go, "This is a Jimmy Stewart role." If it's comedy, "Okay, I see Steve Martin doing this." I am in no way saying I'm on their level, but if people see any quote-unquote movie star in a certain role over and over, they have a preconceived idea. Baggage develops.

PLAYBOY: At this point are you in a position to choose the types of roles you'd like to do?

STILLER: Creative freedom comes with success in this business, but the more success you have, the more pressure you have to do what made you successful in the first place. But as I said, in the future I don't see myself doing the kinds of movies we've been talking about.

PLAYBOY: So in a way you are a bit like Tug.

STILLER: Yes. That can happen at a certain level of celebrity. What makes it—hopefully—comedic is the way he ends up a prisoner of his own image. He gets captured in the Golden Triangle by a remote tribe of heroin traffickers who force him at gunpoint to reenact scenes from *Simple Jack* in which he played a mentally impaired farmhand who can talk to animals. This was his big, serious movie—his Oscar bid. It is being universally ridiculed except in this tiny jungle compound where they love it so much they make him perform it at gunpoint on a sort of *Callaghan's Island* stage five times a day. It's the only movie they've ever seen, so he's kind of worshipped and humiliated at the same time.

PLAYBOY: You've had your share of humiliation in movies. You have your face rubbed in fat-guy sweat in *Along Came Polly*, you're hit by Mickey Rooney in *Night at the Museum*, and you suffer sticky indignity in *There's Something About Mary*. You are physically or verbally tormented in *Dodgeball*, *Zoolander* and pretty much all your movies right up to this new one. Do we detect a theme?

STILLER: It's obviously a through line that people pick up on, but it's not something I seek out. For *Polly* I wasn't pounding the table, saying, "Find me a script where my face is smeared into a sweaty guy."

PLAYBOY: Is there a line of humiliation and abuse you won't cross?

STILLER: There are things I refuse to do. I think I'd draw the line at porn, but no one has asked.

PLAYBOY: Do you regret the types of roles you've had?

STILLER: I'm not going to lie. It's worth getting a little beat-down from Mickey Rooney to hear his stories. One day, out of nowhere, he told me that when he was making *Captains Courageous* at MGM, he drove the first Lincoln Continental ever manufactured right onto the set. Another time he actually told me he gave Walt Disney the name Mickey Mouse. Disney wanted to call the mouse Mortimer. Mickey told him Mickey was better.

PLAYBOY: When you started out, did you fantasize about—dare we say—being as

actor who could determine whether or not a movie got made?

PLAYBOY: So that wasn't your goal, to be a bankable star?

STILLER: Before that I was happy acting, directing—just doing stuff. Suddenly you have this thing called a track record. It's a trap. You have this awareness that, "Wow, that was a success. Now they expect the next one to be a success. But maybe it'll be a onetime thing..." I never thought about any of this before. That's the trap: You start to care too much. It's like, now you're in the penthouse, but there's a trapdoor. You start to miss the days when you were starting out, when you were thrilled to get a callback.

PLAYBOY: You were born into a show-business family. Weren't you just kind of in?

STILLER: God, no. In fact, that's where the idea of *Tropic Thunder* came from. Around 1987 all these Vietnam war movies were being made. I never got any of the roles. I even met with Oliver Stone. Nothing. I remember the guys who got those parts were always doing interviews about going off to boot camp for two weeks, how it was the toughest experience of their lives. They had to camp out, shoot guns, eat C-rations, all of that. There was something so ironic and funny about actors talking about how hard it was to go off to boot camp for two weeks for a movie about a war when it obviously had nothing to do with the real experience of war. It might have been my own bitterness about not getting parts in these movies, but I did think there was the seed of something in the irony of actors taking themselves too seriously. Maybe this movie is my revenge.

PLAYBOY: *Tropic Thunder* is about actors in a war movie who become involved in an actual war. To prepare your actors,

did you send them to boot camp?

STILLER: We were going to have a three-day boot camp with Dale Dye, the boot-camp legend. Then three days became two days. Then it became 24 hours. Finally Stuart Cornfeld, my producing partner, came over and said, "Okay, here's the deal. We can do either the one-day boot camp or a cast dinner." I said, "Fuck it. Let's do the cast dinner."

PLAYBOY: So this movie is bitter because you never got any Vietnam war movie roles?

STILLER: Busted.

PLAYBOY: Why didn't you get any of the roles you tried out for?

STILLER: I'm not a great auditioner. I freeze. For me it's very tough to go into a room full of strangers. I remember I



famous as Mickey Rooney.

STILLER: Are you kidding? When I was starting out all I thought about was, "How am I going to get work?" I auditioned for three or four years before I got a job. Once you start to get work, you just want to figure out a way to keep working.

PLAYBOY: So there was no master plan?

STILLER: I admire actors who have a plan. I wasn't one of them. Looking back, the great part about starting out is, you don't have people assessing who or what you are. Nobody's analyzing your work, because nobody cares. *There's Something About Mary* was my first box-office success. I remember people calling up and saying, "I knew it was going to happen." Suddenly I was some sort of quantifiable

really boned the audition for the Ralph Macchio role in *My Cousin Vinny*. I had a few callbacks, but I blew it. That's why I'm always amazed when I see actors come into a room and relax. When Owen Wilson auditioned for *The Cable Guy*, he was unique. He wasn't polished, but he was laid-back. He didn't push. I didn't think he nailed the audition, but Judel Apatow, who produced the film, said "No, we've got to go with this guy. He's funny." He got it right away. Then I went to see Owen's first movie, *Bottle Rocket*, and I laughed literally from the minute he came on-screen until the end of the movie. I got him.

PLAYBOY: You and Wilson became close friends. It must have been difficult when you heard he was hospitalized last year because of a reported suicide attempt.

STILLER: I love Owen, and I felt bad that he had to deal with all the outside bullshit. It's impossible to understand that kind of pain—depression or anything like that—until you're in it.

PLAYBOY: Is it harder to deal with when you're a public figure and your personal problems are fodder for gossip and entertainment news?

STILLER: It's completely unnatural for people to lead public lives. It has gotten kind of crazy.

PLAYBOY: Why are people so fascinated?

STILLER: People would rather dwell on somebody else's problems than look at their own. Or they'd rather look at somebody else's problems than at what the rest of humanity is going through. Do I want to pick up a copy of *U.S. News & World Report* or grab *Us Weekly*? If I'm in a checkout line, I'll take the one with the big pictures.

PLAYBOY: It's a cliché that many comedians and comic actors have a dark, despairing side. Is that true or exaggerated?

STILLER: I once made a joke to a reporter about manic depression running in my family. The reporter didn't know it was a joke. I picked up the paper and read it. That was when I realized irony doesn't read well. From then on, it has been in every article written about me.

PLAYBOY: Is it a fabrication?

STILLER: Totally. I'm not Mister Funny Guy all the time. I have my moods. I can also be ridiculous. Everybody's a different person with different people. But I said it as a joke.

PLAYBOY: Do people expect you to be funny all the time?

STILLER: If somebody said to me, "Be funny," I couldn't. I don't know how to do that.

PLAYBOY: What about at home, growing up? Your parents were comedians. Were there a lot of laughs around the house?

STILLER: Their comedy was born of necessity. They were both serious actors but weren't working. They needed money, so they started this act. My dad always wanted to be a stand up, but my mom didn't. Stiller and Meara was their last shot. If the act didn't work, my dad was



The Ben Stiller Show didn't last a year on Fox but was one of the first cult shows to prove its worth through DVD sales. Stiller, director Gerardo and Bob Oleniok unleashed unusually edgy and hip sketch-comedy for 13 episodes. From its send-up of *Die Hard* to *Star Wars*, he's smart, and he's running out of one-liners.

Reality Bites captured the Generation X zeitgeist—unless you ask a Gen Xer. Stiller did succeed at creating a great soundtrack that introduced the look to the world. Needless to say, that Stiller was a directorial rookie? The character he played didn't get the girl. *Wine & Roses*.

There's Something About Mary—described on *Teen* and *Entertainment* as "the seminal gross-out comedy," the site had allowed five words; the reviewer would have started screaming. The film has spunk, zipper, Brett Favre and Jason Priestley at the best date movie ever.

Zelig—who would have thought this would be so really ridiculously goofy? Stiller gave Will Ferrell his breakout role as Magoo and invented the blue-dyed pose. Yes, we are comfortable with our sexuality when we say it took balls for the semi-nude Stiller to cast himself as the world's hottest male model.

Meet the Parents. Robert De Niro as a prospective father-in-law? Turned out to be hilarious. Stiller's most popular franchise (more than \$800 million) costs him perfectly as the clumsy good guy. A third thing about the *Little Rascals* is planned. Finally, we will see Ed Grimley. *Entertainment* has nothing. *Becky Acharya*.

going to get out of the business and market his special chicken *gai yang*.

PLAYBOY: Chicken *gai yang*?

STILLER: I recently learned this. They were living in Washington Heights, and he found a Thai chicken recipe he had big plans for. If their act hadn't taken off, it would have been Stiller and Meara Chicken Wings.

PLAYBOY: You must have been relieved they stayed in show business instead.

STILLER: I can tell you it was not fun watching them on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.

PLAYBOY: Why? Did they bomb?

STILLER: No, no! It was stressful. *Ed Sullivan* was like *American Idol*. It was the one show everybody watched. Ed had to like you so you could get invited back. My parents were on 30 times. But even when I was really young I was afraid they would screw up. Seeing them perform in nightclubs or watching them on TV at home, there was always a low-grade tension. It's probably why I've never enjoyed live performing. I've never done stand up. I associate it with tremendous pressure.

PLAYBOY: Did you inherit your parents' sense of humor?

STILLER: Actually, I've always liked to laugh at people more than make people laugh. I guess they did give me certain comedy values. Like my mother couldn't

stand the Three Stooges, so that made me biased against them.

PLAYBOY: Who did you like?

STILLER: My mother and I liked Abbott and Costello. Their movies came on WPIN in New York on Sunday mornings. My favorite was *The Time of Their Lives*; they played Revolutionary War ghosts.

PLAYBOY: Did you spend a lot of time with your father? What did you learn from him?

STILLER: Sure, and he was great. After living through the Depression, my father thought being funny was very important, something he really enjoyed.

PLAYBOY: What about the downside?

STILLER: He was not so good with pets. I have had a very spotty history with dog training, which I trace directly to my father. Now that I think of it, it's horrible. But I don't know if I should talk about it.

PLAYBOY: What happened?

STILLER: Okay. When we were kids, my sister and I decided we wanted a dog, so my mom took us to get a rescue. We saw this dog in a window at the Bide-A Wee home. Her name was Sugar. We took her back to our apartment on Riverside Drive. She was part collie, part shepherd, really sweet. But she was not house-trained, which my dad was not happy about. My sister and I said we'd take care of her. Naturally my father ended up being the one who had to

do everything, including house-training. One day he brought in this trainer. I don't remember his name, but he had a Vandyke and American cheese.

PLAYBOY: A Vandyke and American cheese?

STILLER: Yes. I went downstairs to watch the guy work. He would stand in front of the dog and hold up the American cheese to get her to sit. And he had what to me was a very inhumane method of house-training the dog. It involved suppositories.

PLAYBOY: Suppositories?

STILLER: I don't want to get into it.

PLAYBOY: You think you can just march out dog suppositories with no explanation?

STILLER: Look, this was 30 years ago. I don't think the practice is widely accepted. It's probably the most politically incorrect training method in history. The suppositories were supposed to stimulate the dog.

PLAYBOY: To do what?

STILLER: To go to the bathroom. My dad had to administer them—on the street.

PLAYBOY: Seriously? You saw that as a child? Did it scar you?

STILLER: I did see that. Jesus, now that I think of it, it's crazy. I can't imagine having to do it. God, that's a horrible image.

PLAYBOY: What happened to Sugar?

STILLER: Years of therapy. No, in truth she didn't last. We had to give her back.

PLAYBOY: Is it safe to assume you've given up on house pets?

STILLER: My wife, Christine, and I have two dogs. We're getting a puppy in a couple of days for my daughter's birthday.

PLAYBOY: Will you be in charge of house-training it?

STILLER: Like I said, my record is a little spotty.

PLAYBOY: Dog rearing aside, was growing up in your parents' world of show business a good thing for you?

STILLER: Oh yeah. My parents knew everybody. I met a lot of comedians and actors. Rodney Dangerfield was a good friend of my parents'. They went way back to when he was still known as Jack Roy. He would always come over for the holidays.

PLAYBOY: What was it like celebrating holidays with Rodney Dangerfield?

STILLER: Rodney was Rodney. He had so much energy. He was always the focus of the room. He was a sweet guy, but he had a tortured quality to him, which was the basis of who he was—and the basis of his act. Years later I went to see him about appearing in one of my movies. I met him at the Beverly Hilton. He came out in his bathrobe. You're sort of there to see the king. When you saw the king, you saw all of the king.

PLAYBOY: Meaning?

STILLER: Rodney's robe was always a little bit open. I tried to maintain eye contact at all times. I didn't want to look down.

PLAYBOY: Who else did you meet through your parents?

STILLER: My parents were always connected in the comedy world. It wasn't a Hollywood sort of thing, but it was very New York. They used to have these crazy New

Year's Eve parties. My dad did *Hurlyburly* on Broadway for three years, so all the people from the show would be there—William Hurt, Sigourney Weaver, Kevin Spacey, Harvey Keitel, Rodney, of course. Andy Kaufman came once. I think he was daunting. Elaine Bosler. In the early 1980s Jerry Suller and Anne Mearns's New Year's Eve party was a place people would show up. I was, like, 17, 18, 19. It was exciting. I was in awe of Hurt at the time. He'd sit down and talk to me about acting. I never tried to network or anything, but show business was all around us. I wanted to be part of that world. I loved the feeling of camaraderie among the actors.

PLAYBOY: Were your parents so cool you never felt a need to rebel against them?

STILLER: I went out to the West Coast to UCLA for a couple of quarters but then dropped out and came back home, so I kind of missed out on the whole youthful-rebellion, learning-to-be-on-your-own thing. I was the guy who dropped out and moved back in with his parents.

PLAYBOY: When did you finally move out for good?

STILLER: I was about 20. I made the big

My dad's eyes popped out of his head. It was like, What is this woman doing with my boy? My mom's very matter-of-fact about stuff. Nothing shocks her.

leap from my parents' place on Riverside to 83rd Street and Broadway, about four blocks away. As soon as I moved I got this girlfriend who was 15 years older than I was. She was an older woman, though I didn't think of her as an older woman. I met her in acting class. I remember the look on my dad's face when he met her. She was not only older, she was also about six feet tall and a complete knockout.

PLAYBOY: How did your father respond?

STILLER: My dad's eyes popped out of his head. It was like, What is this woman doing with my boy? I probably should have warned them I had a girlfriend.

PLAYBOY: Did he take you aside for a father-son talk?

STILLER: I'm still waiting for that.

PLAYBOY: How did your mother respond?

STILLER: My mom's very matter-of-fact about stuff. Nothing shocks her. She was like, "As long as you have your health."

PLAYBOY: So far *Tropic Thunder* has gotten good buzz. How do you capitalize on that?

STILLER: I've been trying to arrange a *Tropic Thunder* tour for the troops, but I don't know if we'll be able to. I had this idea of bringing actors from the movie

and showing it at military bases. Basically, the idea is to bring a little bit of entertainment to guys out there dealing with real danger—with sort of *Apocalypse Now* go-go dancers. I may actually be dancing myself, which would be reverse motivation for the troops to want to get away from the base. "Please don't make me watch. I want to go back to war."

PLAYBOY: The role you cast Tom Cruise in for this movie—he's a bald, take-no-prisoners studio head—is unlike any version of him people have seen. Was it difficult to get him to take the role?

STILLER: The role was his idea. It wasn't even in the script. I didn't have to persuade him. He had the notion that if we had a studio head along with the actors, you'd see the whole business, how people interact. We decided the studio head would determine that the actors were more valuable dead; the studio would make more money by cashing in their insurance policies.

Tom is amazing. We'd be talking about the characters, and in the middle of the conversation he'd say something like "My character should have these giant hands." I remember thinking at the time, Wait, did he just say "giant hands"? I seriously believe the man is a movie savant. The last time I saw him do something this out there was in *Magnolia*.

PLAYBOY: Was it intimidating to direct or act with someone at that level of stardom?

STILLER: It depends. I wouldn't say intimidating. With Robert Downey Jr., for example, it was closer to embarrassing.

PLAYBOY: Why was working with Downey embarrassing?

STILLER: Because I was so blown away by the guy, I started trying to copy him. It was like, Wow, this guy's a genius, maybe if I do what he does, I'll be a genius too! So I started doing what he did.

PLAYBOY: What did he do?

STILLER: If Downey had some crazy vitamins, I'd get some. If he had spun around and thrown oat bran at the moon, I'd have run out, bought some oat bran and started spinning. I want to look like I'm as big a genius as he is.

PLAYBOY: Did the vitamins help?

STILLER: They didn't help me, but Downey nailed the part. He plays Kirk Lazarus, a five-time Academy Award winner, the most respected actor of his generation—up there with the Daniel Day-Lewises, the Sean Penns and the Russell Crowes—and he's playing an African American. We had to find a funny, great, serious guy people would actually buy as a great actor. Someone who *was* a great actor—a great white actor—playing a black sergeant in a 1972 Vietnam war movie.

PLAYBOY: What inspired that?

STILLER: I was talking to Justin Theroux, a writer on the movie. It hit us how funny it would be to see this massively talented actor take on the role of an African American and play it completely straight. I don't think another actor could have

pulled it off. On every level he was a different kind of person than I expected.
PLAYBOY: What were you expecting?
STILLER: Well, Robert Downey Jr. Obviously, he has had his troubles that everybody knows about. But you look at him and you see a guy so happy and generous that he makes those working with him better. He has this sharp, cynical thing going on, too. Some kind of anger fuels his acting, but he has found a balance that enables him to use it. I don't think I ever directed an actor that good. It was daunting. Even eating with him was daunting.

PLAYBOY: Why was that daunting?

STILLER: His mind works so fast, when you eat with him you almost have to stop what you're doing and think about what he's saying. He has a unique thought process. Our first few dinners, I couldn't keep up at all. I was laughing and literally going back three sentences trying to understand what he was saying. You're on guard when you're around him but in a good way, because you don't want to miss anything. He's throwing out ideas—really good ideas—in a torrent.

PLAYBOY: You're a dad now. Does being a family man influence your work?

STILLER: The biggest difference is that I wasn't accountable before. I tend to be a workaholic. You can keep some pretty insane hours when you don't have to be anywhere. But now I do have to be somewhere.

PLAYBOY: Was there a conflict between work and family?

STILLER: There's always that conflict. And it's not just about time. When you're with your kids, you have to actually be there. You can't be thinking about how this scene has to be cut or that bit of music needs to be redone or about the scene you're shooting tomorrow. You need to find some balance, which was an entirely new concept for me. But hey, I've been married almost eight years. I live a pretty boring, stable life.

PLAYBOY: In an alternate universe, what would you be doing if you hadn't ended up directing and acting?

STILLER: As a kid I was interested in being an archaeologist. I was into Egyptology. Also I loved scuba diving. I was an assistant diving instructor when I was a teenager. So I might have had some kind of undersea career. Another thing I loved was astronomy. In the summer, I took some extracurricular classes at the Hayden Planetarium in New York with my mom.

PLAYBOY: You took astronomy classes with your mom?

STILLER: Yeah, and it was great. I loved that. But you know, once you get into all the stars and the constellations, eventually some math will be involved. That's when it always broke down for me. I've got some deep and unresolved math issues. I suck at it.

PLAYBOY: It's no secret that a lot of actors' production companies are more or less vanity operations, but yours actually makes movies.

STILLER: Well, I don't want to get into

other people's operations, but yeah, this year we were really busy. I mean, I got to direct and produce *Tropic Thunder* and my company, Red Hour, produced *The Runes*, which we developed from a great script by Scott Smith, the novelist and screenwriter who wrote *A Simple Plan*. The best thing about where I am now is getting to work with writers I love, trying to develop things a major studio might not necessarily jump on. It's always an uphill fight. One of the things I want to do is *Civil War* and in *Bad Decline*, from the short story by George Saunders, the *New Yorker* writer. He has been working on the script for the better part of 10 years.

PLAYBOY: Didn't you develop and make *Dodgeball* after the studio passed?

STILLER: Yeah, but it's that way with any script that gets made eventually, unless it's some high-concept tent-pole thing. That's what being a producer is—trying to get things made. At this point I think I'm a better director than producer. I'm not the first person to say it's hard to get things made in Hollywood. *Tropic Thunder* took nine years.

PLAYBOY: You obviously don't need the

People tend to look at acting and say, "I could do that." I wish everybody could come on a set and try it. It has taken me 10 years to get to where I feel comfortable.

money, so what keeps you going?

STILLER: One of the reasons—no, one of the obligations you have when you get to a certain place in this business—is to take on projects that would not happen otherwise.

PLAYBOY: Is there a movie you made that you really love that didn't come easy?

STILLER: *Zoolander*. That was a hard one. And when it finally got made, it came out two weeks after September 11.

PLAYBOY: Was there any talk of delaying the release?

STILLER: Obviously, there could not have been a worse time to put out a movie. But at the same time, I couldn't think of any reason not to release it, other than people would be worried it wouldn't make as much money. *Zoolander* is more gratifying than any of the big-box-office movies I've been in.

PLAYBOY: What makes it more gratifying?

STILLER: What it has become for people. The way it has lasted. Who could have predicted that? That's why you keep pushing. I've been trying to make *What Makes Sammy Run?* for, I don't know, 10 or 11 years. People were trying to make it for 50 years before me. I'm now too old to play Sammy, the part that made me

want to do the movie in the first place. But that's the deal, man. You're always doing this at the same time you're trying to figure out how to do that. If you really believe in a project, if you have that passion, you have to be patient. And meanwhile you have to keep working, keep making movies. That's the nature of the business. It's like acting. There's more to making movies than people see.

PLAYBOY: What is the reality that people don't see about acting?

STILLER: People tend to look at acting and say, "I could do that." I wish everybody could come on a set one time, stand in front of the camera and try it. When suddenly everyone is looking at you, the chemistry changes. It has taken me 10 years of working to get to the point where I feel comfortable. Try being funny or emotional when there's a bunch of union guys sitting around waiting for lunch, a director telling you to do something, an actor across from you who may or may not be giving you anything, a camera staring at you and some guy in a suit in a corner texting, probably about you.

PLAYBOY: Are you looking for sympathy?

STILLER: No, that's what the job is. I'm sure any surgeon would probably say, "Nobody understands what it's like to cut open a human body." Or some fireman's reading this, going, "Nobody understands what it's like to walk into a burning building."

Those jobs are a lot more daunting.

PLAYBOY: Do you prefer working with directors who have acted?

STILLER: Directors who haven't acted don't have the same relationship to an actor. I've worked with directors who will give you a line reading off the bat. To me that's the death of creativity. You might as well be a puppet. Anytime I work with a director who has some acting experience—even if it was 20 years ago for five minutes—they know what it's like to get in front of a camera and try to portray reality. It makes a difference. Acting can be the most creative, amazing experience in the world. But it's a weird thing to do for a living.

PLAYBOY: Is it less weird when you have your own customized trailer? Is it true you designed yours?

STILLER: How do you know that? That's horrible to talk about. A custom trailer sounds so... [laughs] Well, you know how it sounds.

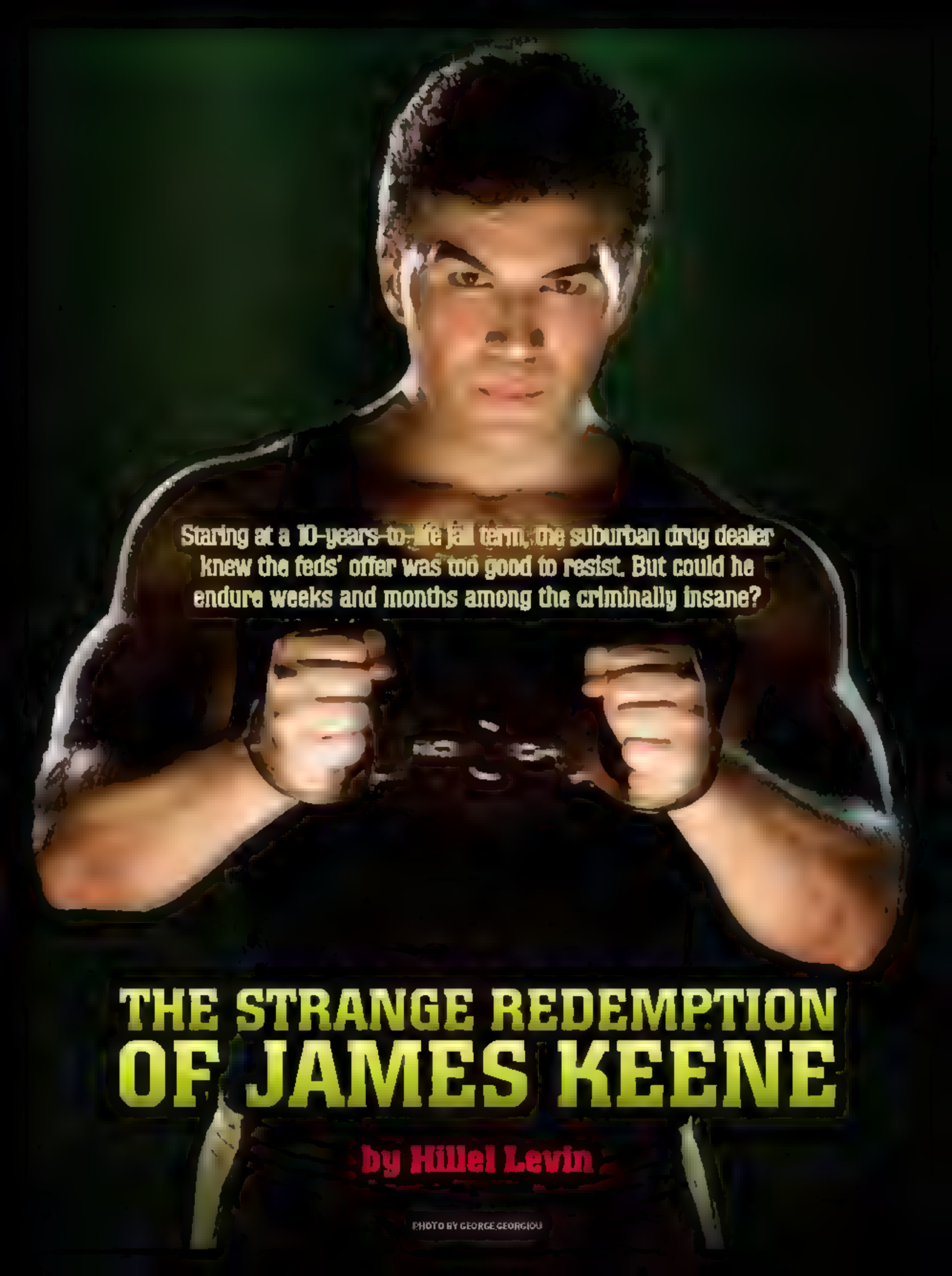
PLAYBOY: You've come clean about dog suppositories, yet you're ashamed to talk about a custom-made trailer?

STILLER: Dog suppositories are somehow less embarrassing. But if we're going to talk about it, we should get it straight. I did not design it, and it is not exactly custom-made. I told them some things I thought would make it a little more comfortable than average.

PLAYBOY: What's wrong with the regular trailers?

STILLER: Believe me, they can suck. And you know, given the nature of moviemaking,

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Starting at a 10-years-to-life jail term, the suburban drug dealer knew the feds' offer was too good to resist. But could he endure weeks and months among the criminally insane?

THE STRANGE REDEMPTION OF JAMES KEENE

by Hillel Levin

PHOTO BY GEORGE GEORGIOU



Sometime after midnight in August 1998, U.S. marshals drive Jim Keene to a government runway near O'Hare airport. On his previous flights as a federal prisoner, Keene had been chained inside a ratty Con

Air cargo plane. This time he sits in a sleek corporate jet with plush leather seats. The marshals let him fly without cuffs or shackles and even share their food. At dawn they land on a private airstrip outside Springfield, Missouri. When they step off the jet, they get into a van waiting on the tarmac.

As they drive down tree-lined country roads and past lush farm-land, Jim can't help but breathe the fresh air and feel hopeful about his prospects. He has just begun serving a 10-years-to-life sentence on drug charges, yet he has a deal on the table that could free him in no time. The van is going to the Springfield Medical Center for Federal Prisoners, a maximum-security penitentiary for psychiatric patients, many of them criminally insane.

With only the warden and chief psychiatrist knowing the true purpose of his transfer, Keene could, if everything goes right, be out in weeks with no strings attached. And if it doesn't go right? He doesn't even want to think about that.

Riding with the marshals makes Jim feel like a normal guy. He thinks about the strange path that led him, the son of a policeman, to a life of crime. *I could have been one of them, he thinks. How did I end up on the other side?*

Everybody is silent when they see the penitentiary. Jim's low-security prison in Milan, Michigan is made up of low-level buildings that sprawl across manicured lawns like a college campus. But the MCFP rises from the Missouri plains in big, jagged blocks. There are guard towers, barbed wire and, in the early-morning haze, a floodlight glow over the redbrick exterior like something out of a James Cagney movie.

"This sure ain't no Milan," Jim says out loud.

The marshals look at Jim, worried that he is about to abort. Jim thanks again about the assistant U.S. attorney, Lawrence Beaumont, who engineered his transfer. Beaumont is the man who put Keene in prison. Until Beaumont offered him the deal Jim had feared and despised him. As he watches the penitentiary loom before him, Jim asks the marshals: "What if Beaumont backs out? I'll be locked up here forever with nothing to do."

The marshals tell Jim that Beaumont won't back out. But when their pleading doesn't work, the supervisor grabs Jim's arms. As he puts the cuffs and shackles on, he tells him, "I'm doing this for your own good."

The marshals have planned to arrive between the Springfield guards' shifts so there won't be too many questions about the newcomer. The van is buzzed inside the prison compound. When the van stops, its door opens and Keene is shoved out as if he were just another scumbag prisoner. As Jim watches the marshals joke with the guards, he wonders if he is being played for a fool. Only as the marshals climb back into the van, when the guards have their heads turned, does one marshal look at Jim and sneak him a thumbs-up. When the guards

shout at him to remove his clothes and prepare for a strip search, the thumbs-up is his only consolation.

Keene is issued the prison's military-style uniform: green shirt, camouflage pants and black shoes, and is taken in shackles and cuffs to his cell. Except for the track metal doors, his floor looks more like a hospital corridor than a prison block. He has arranged his few toiletries when the bell sounds for breakfast. He stumbles out of his cell, still in a daze from not sleeping, and is engulfed in the prison's rush hour. Some people are running. Some are shouting. In their camouflage outfits they are like a bizarre army surging through the halls. There are always screams, and sometimes Jim hears guys crying. Worse yet are those men who shuffle forward with blank expressions, so jacked up on drugs they look like zombies. He follows the crowd to the cavernous dining hall, where the noises echo even louder. With the sound of thousands of guys blabbing and yelling and all the plates clinking and trays clacking, this is a new kind of hell for Jim Keene.

He looks for the place to pick up his tray, but his eyes lock on a short and stocky con, Larry Hall. For weeks, as he prepared for this mission, Jim stared at Hall's pictures. Although Hall's face has grown pudgy in prison, Keene is sure it's Hall. Before Keene left for Springfield, his FBI handlers warned him not to approach Hall too soon after arrival, so as not to make him suspicious. But at the first sight of his quarry, Jim feels

his body go numb. He starts having crazy thoughts. *Maybe I can talk him into helping me out. Or maybe I can just beat the information out of him.* While Keene's thinking, his body is in motion until—bang—he bumps right into him. Hall looks up at Jim in confusion. Keene is sure he has ruined everything.

When Larry Beaumont first yanked Keene out of the federal pen in Michigan and sent him back to a county jail in central Illinois, Jim had his suspicions about what the prosecutor wanted. In building his drug empire, Keene had worked with a tempting array of targets for the feds, from Mexican drug lords to Chicago-area mobsters. His customers included club owners, doctors, lawyers, politicians and porn stars. Some investigators had focused on Jim's father, a police and fire department officer who was friendly with several shady elected officials in his hometown of Kankakee, 50 miles south of Chicago. Keene hadn't turned government witness on any of them, and he wasn't about to start.

In the jail conference room, Beaumont stares down at him as he did in court. With a full gray beard, he reminds Jim of an Old Testament prophet. This time sheriff's deputies and FBI agents sit with Jim. With a dramatic flourish, Beaumont slides a fat accordion file across the table.

Nothing has prepared Jim for the first grossy photograph he pulls from the folder. It isn't a picture of a drug dealer. It's a picture of the naked body of a dead young woman sprawled between rows of standing corn. Her face is swollen and bloody. As best he can with the cuffs, Jim turns over photo after photo of the grisly scene. With dread he wonders: *Are they trying to pin this on me too?*



Inmate inmates like suspected serial killer Larry Hall are held in the Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Missouri.

He looks up expecting to see Beaumont scowl, but the prosecutor's gaze is no longer so hard. Keene continues through the file, flipping through graduation portraits of attractive young women interspersed with terse police reports. Some were found dead and like the girl in the corner, showed signs of strangulation. Others are still missing.

The pageant of victims ends with the mug shot of a man. Notations at the bottom of the photo indicate he was booked into an Indiana county jail in 1944, but his cherubic face framed by slick strands of hair, a trimmed mustache and muttonchop sideburns, looks as if it were snapped a century earlier. His strange eyes stare off into the distance. His full name is Larry Duane Hall. At 34 he is a year older than Keene. Beaumont says Hall is already serving a life sentence for abducting the girl in the corner (his side carries no federal sentence) but an appeal is pending. And Beaumont adds, "We think he's responsible for more than 20 other killings."

Hall's grooming tied him to many victims. Their disappearance coincided with battled reenactments at nearby parks and campgrounds. A history buff, Hall traveled the country portraying a Union foot soldier. He even appeared as an extra in two Civil War films, *Glory* and *Gettysburg*. His muttonchops were intended to make his face look as authentic as his uniform and rifle.

"We had a full-blown confession," Beaumont says to Keene, but then he retracted it." Jim looks at the photos of the girls and listens to Beaumont talk about Hall, but he barely absorbs the details. Finally he asks, "What does this have to do with me?"

"We want to place you in the federal penitentiary where Hall is to see if you can get him to talk," Beaumont says. Hall has been a model prisoner, attending to the building's boiler room and carving falcons in the wood shop. Other than the warden, only the chief psychiatrist would know Jim's objective. "You're the perfect guy for this job," Beaumont says. "You have the sort of personality that can deal with everyone."

Jim still doesn't get it. "I don't have experience with serial killers," he says. "Why don't you send an FBI guy?"

"Hall would smell him from a mile away," says Beaumont. He'll get spooked and go into a shell that no one will open.

Beaumont also wants Hall to confess to another crime: the murder of Tricia Lynn Rafter, an Indiana college student who disappeared 27 miles from Hall's hometown. Her case drew national attention, but it also created a bitter dispute between the feds and local police about who abducted her. "Tell us where he put that body and you get an early release," Beaumont says. "An unconditional release. No parole or onerous fine. Absolutely nothing."



Larry Hall (top left photo, on right, in Civil War garb with his brother) held the key to Jim Keene's release. A mug shot of Hall (top right) taken at his arrest in Wabash, Indiana in 1994. Jim Keene wanted to set things right with his father, Big Jim (above, holding child), who had been a cop and a lieutenant in the Kankakee, Illinois fire department before his career ended. For Jim (right), the feds' deal was his best chance to restore his family's reputation.



But then the old Beaumont scowl returns, and the prosecutor adds, "If you don't get us the location of the body you don't get released. No body, no release."

Jim asks Beaumont for some time to consider the offer. He shuffles in shackles back to his cell with the Larry Hall file under his arm. He is supposed to study the documents to prepare for his mission, but he has little privacy to do so. Three men awaiting trial share his cell. One of them is always looking over Keene's shoulder. Jim can read only at night, by the hall light, while the others sleep.

The file contains newspaper clippings from the *Wabash Plain Dealer* that chronicle Hall's arrest and trials. Many of the alleged victims look alike: high school and college students in their late teens, with long brown hair and short athletic builds. Although the disappearance or murder of some coincided with Civil War reenactments, other victims were from college towns an hour or two south of Hall's home in Wabash, a faded factory town in north-central Indiana.

The more Jim reads about Hall, the more he wonders if he is up to it. If he can't beat a confession out of him, he has no training to trick it out of him, either. According to Beaumont, Keene would be the first federal prisoner ever to request a transfer from a low-security prison to a maximum-security penitentiary. He has already been jumped twice, and though he has a black belt in karate, he knows his survival will depend as much on luck as on skill.

(Continued on page 64.)



"Miss, I said put your hands on the car."



THE SURREAL WIFE

Susie Feldman stands by her man

Admit it. You wish you were Corey Feldman. Not because he hangs with Hef and starred in classic movies like *Stand by Me* and *The Lost Boys* but because he gets to wake up next to Susie Feldman, his gorgeous wife, whom you see before you. We got to know the feisty brunette as Corey's fiancée on the 2003 debut season of *The Surreal Life*. The couple had what Susie calls a "fairy-tale wedding" on the show and now have a four-year-old son, Zen. Susie credits Corey with helping her curb her hard-partying ways and transforming her into a vegetarian, fervent animal-rights supporter and protective mother. "I was a lost puppy," says Susie, 26. "Now I am a full-blown housewife, and I love it. Corey and I fight for animal rights at home, at rallies and on the floor of Congress. Family, spirituality and positivity are important to me."

You'll see more of Susie's transformation this summer on the second season of A&E's reality series *The Two Coreys*, which again co-stars her husband's childhood pal Corey Haim. "They are like 12-year-old boys when they get together," says Susie. This season Haim no longer lives with the Feldmans, Susie tells us, "but when he comes back to L.A. for a fresh start, he somehow wreaks more havoc when he's away from us than when he's in our home. It's apparent which Corey has his stuff together and which doesn't. Viewers will get an honest look at the dynamic of their friendship and our marriage."

Maintaining the heat in her marriage requires Susie to enforce certain rules—"When the house is covered with baby toys, your bedroom needs to be a sanctuary that's sexy and adult"—and to shed others. "I have no inhibitions and am attracted to women," Susie reports. "When my husband sees a girl walk by, I was probably looking first. It's hard for Middle America to swallow the idea that you can be married, extremely in love with each other, totally healthy and sometimes share a girl. *PLAYBOY* was one of the first magazines I ever read, but I used to be in denial about liking to look at naked women. The good thing is I can explore this with Corey, because I trust him. We're doing something right. It all works."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA



Top: Corey Haim, Susie Feldman and Corey Feldman play house on A&E's *The Two Coreys*; left, Corey's better half gets tongues wagging at the Gene Simmons roast at the Key Club; below, Susie steps out with her husband at a Hollywood movie screening in March.







See more of Susie at cyberplayboy.com



REDEMPTION

(continued from page 56)

Yet Keene realizes Beaumont's scheme offers him something more than an early release. It could transform his drug sentence into something good. It could redeem his and his father's reputation. And his father feels partly responsible for his son's descent into crime.

Big Jim has been the greatest influence on Keene's life. At six foot-four, with the shoulders and biceps of a football lineman, he was once as handsome as a movie star. Keene's mother, Lynn, a raven-haired beauty, completed the picture of a perfectly matched couple. Besides serving as a ranking officer, first in the police department and then in the fire department, Big Jim had a construction business on the side to take advantage of his political connections. His wife had her own bar and grill. They raised Keene (known as Jimmy) and his younger brother and sister in a big house. They appeared to have a storybook marriage. Behind closed doors, though, a different plot played out. Jimmy's parents fought constantly about money and his mother's nighthawk ways. When Keene was 11, his parents divorced, and his childhood effectively ended.

Keene enrolled in Kankakee's inner-city high school, where he lettered in track and wrestling and, as the star running back, led the football team to the state championship game. Keene was self-conscious about his family's relatively modest means. He felt that stigma grow when Big Jim was dragged into a well-publicized drug sting. Although nothing came of it, the stain remained on the father and, by extension, the son. "My mom was losing her restaurant, and my dad was going broke on a fireman's salary," Keene recalls, "and everybody thought I was the godfather's kid."

As people kept approaching Jimmy for dope, he eventually thought about supplying them. "If I could get them their party goods, I was the man of the hour," he says. Although not a user himself, he had several pot-smoking friends who introduced him to their local contacts. Keene was well suited to build a sales network. He could rerun his wrestler and football-player buddies to be dealers.

When Keene graduated, most Kankakee football fans expected him to become a running back at a major university. (He had several offers from big name schools.) Instead he chose to attend a community college in a Chicago suburb. He explained to Big Jim that he wanted to remain close to Kankakee. In fact he was making too much money to leave his drug operation behind.

"I realized I could put the college education on hold," Keene says, "and become a millionaire very quickly." He dropped out of school in 1984, after his

sophomore year, though he later went back and got his degrees. With too much cash to bank, he spent it on "stupid shit" he didn't need.

He also bailed out Big Jim. When his father was on the verge of eviction, Jimmy arrived at his door with a bag full of \$350,000 in cash. Before his father could ask where it came from, Keene told him, "Please don't ask any questions."

It was the first of many infusions into Big Jim's affairs—a sort of reverse trust fund. His father trusted that the source of money wasn't too bad. The son trusted that his father could somehow leverage the cash into a legitimate enterprise. Fueled by his son's funds, Big Jim was riding high again, but every place he sunk Jimmy's money was a dry hole.

If Big Jim had any illusions about the source of his son's wealth, they were dispelled in 1992 when Jimmy and his younger brother, Tim, were busted with 150 pounds of pot. Because the local narcs made mistakes in the search and seizure, the brothers got off with probation. But no matter how he tried, Keene couldn't get out of the business. "I wanted \$5 million I could bury in a hole," he says. "Then I'd get a job and start a normal life." But Big Jim's deals ate into all his savings.

The regional narcotics strike force kept an eye on Jimmy Keene. It was only a matter of time before the Drug Enforcement Agency infiltrated his organization. When DEA officers raided his house in 1996, they knew about the safe under his bathroom floor. Inside they found bags of coke and weed, along with an electronic scale. In an attic safe they found cash they had given an informant to buy cocaine. Keene decided to take a plea, believing his sentence would be based on the minimal amounts of drugs found in his safe. But Beaumont also charged Keene with the amounts he was alleged to have sold to informants.

When Keene heard the judge give him a 10-year sentence, the life went out of him. His mother cried hysterically. But as he stumbled out of the courtroom, he couldn't take his eyes off his father. "He was pale white with a vacant stare," says Jim, "like he was lost."

The next time Keene saw his father was through thick glass in the prison visiting room. His father still looked lost, but as soon as Jim appeared across from him in his jumpsuit, he started to cry. Jim cried too. "It's my fault," Big Jim kept saying. "If only I hadn't raised you around so much corruption."

Nearly a year later, while Keene contemplates Beaumont's offer, he is told his father has suffered a stroke. He can't believe the news. Despite all Big Jim's financial and romantic setbacks, he always seemed physically indestructible—until Jim's brother pushed him into the visitors' room in a wheelchair. "I had to go back to my cell with that vision of him in my head," Keene recalls. "It got me very

determined." Jim called his lawyer and told him to seal the deal with Beaumont. It might be the only way he'd get out of prison while his father was still alive.

The FBI agents want Jim to take six months to size up Hall before approaching him. There is no way Jim will wait that long. But he doesn't expect to bump into Hall in the cafeteria just hours after he arrives.

At first Hall pulls away from him, alarmed, his head moving in slow motion. Keene holds up his hands in apology. "Sorry," he says. "I'm new here. You look cool. Can you tell me how you get your food here?"

Hall points where he should go but then asks, "You think I'm cool?"

"Look at these other guys around you," Keene replies.

Hall laughs and then offers to show him the library later. "I read the paper there every day," he says.

Not only did Jim practically knock him over, but he said exactly the sort of thing that should have made Hall suspicious. Still, Jim starts to think he can accomplish his mission in weeks instead of months.

That morning he meets the chief psychiatrist. The shrink places Keene in a cell directly opposite from Hall. While Jim can keep his name, he needs to claim his sentence is for a different offense, since drug dealers are usually held in lower-security prisons. Jim pretends to be an interstate weapons runner who has become severely depressed and possibly suicidal.

He is under the chief psychiatrist's direct care. As he perches on his desk, the doctor, a tall man in shirtsleeves, stresses that Jim has to keep his mission confidential. For prisoners, no conduct is worse than informing.

Keene's only other contact with the outside world comes to see him the next Sunday in the penitentiary's large open visiting room. At first, when told he has a visitor, Keene thinks Big Jim has tracked him down. But waiting for him instead is a blonde with cropped hair. She wears a conservative blazer and a dressy skirt. She is attractive if not exactly his type. Jim goes over to her with his hand extended, and she quickly pulls him into an embrace and kisses him, whispering in his ear, "I'm supposed to be your girlfriend."

This is Janice Butkus, FBI agent and niece of former Chicago Bears linebacker Dick Butkus. She uses an assumed name to sign in. If Jim discovers anything from Hall, she will work outside to confirm it. She also gives him a phone number to call in case of emergency. Jim promises he will study Hall only from a distance. He doesn't reveal that he has already talked to Hall and even arranged to meet him a few times in the library. But then again, not much has come of these developments. There is no way they can

(continued on page 121)



F. THORNE

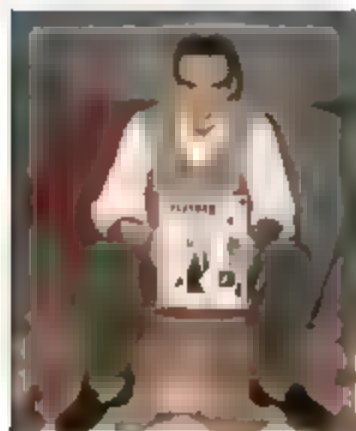
"Now, what seems to be the problem?"

Playboy did more than just usher in the sexual revolution. It also inspired a whole new way of living

The Birth of the

COOL

By Kim Zame



First, on behalf of Big Daddy himself, let me bid you hello again, cats! Welcome back to the very place where, some half-hundred-plus years ago, the Cool (genus *Originalis*) began its sublime come-on, sly but confident, so as to upgrade your life forever—even if you hadn't been born yet. True! From late 1953 onward, herein glowed America's chief oracle of stylistic smooth-

itude and unshackled sensibility—fraternal finesse dispenser numero uno. Not that the management around here ever dared take bows for spreading the essential seeds of the Cool, since that would've been Not So Cool. (Whereas, per them, basking somewhat in the triumphant marshaling of the sexual revolution across a hypocrisy-choked society—hey, no problem there!) Cool, you see, intrinsically defies self-congratulation, especially with regard to celebrating one's own coolness. Anyway, the larger point is, back in the middle of the last century, times were simpler (and duller), and nobody knew what to do or how to comport themselves enviably, although the Cool thing was to pretend you did, because the new world (full of jazzy new promise) was arriving so fast, all anyone could really do was fake it to make it. And that would include one particularly ambitious fellow who in those early days wore pajamas mostly for *sleeping*, if you can imagine, but did his dreaming (also ambitious) around the clock anyway, since dreams and dream peddling of the swank and urbane variety were to forever be his bag. Lest you doubt me, your fingers at present happen to be gripping precisely what that quixotic cat first let out of his bag, such as it swings lately, such as it has swung from come-on to get-go and beyond.

Now, if before his mission took flight—that is, if before one H.M. Hefner (Hef to you and me) made the scene—he was perceived as perhaps Not So Cool, he was not alone, in that we were all born basically square (even Miles D. and Francis

MAINTAINING THE COOL
THE COOL IS A WAY OF LIFE
THE COOL IS A WAY OF LIFE
THE COOL IS A WAY OF LIFE
THE COOL IS A WAY OF LIFE

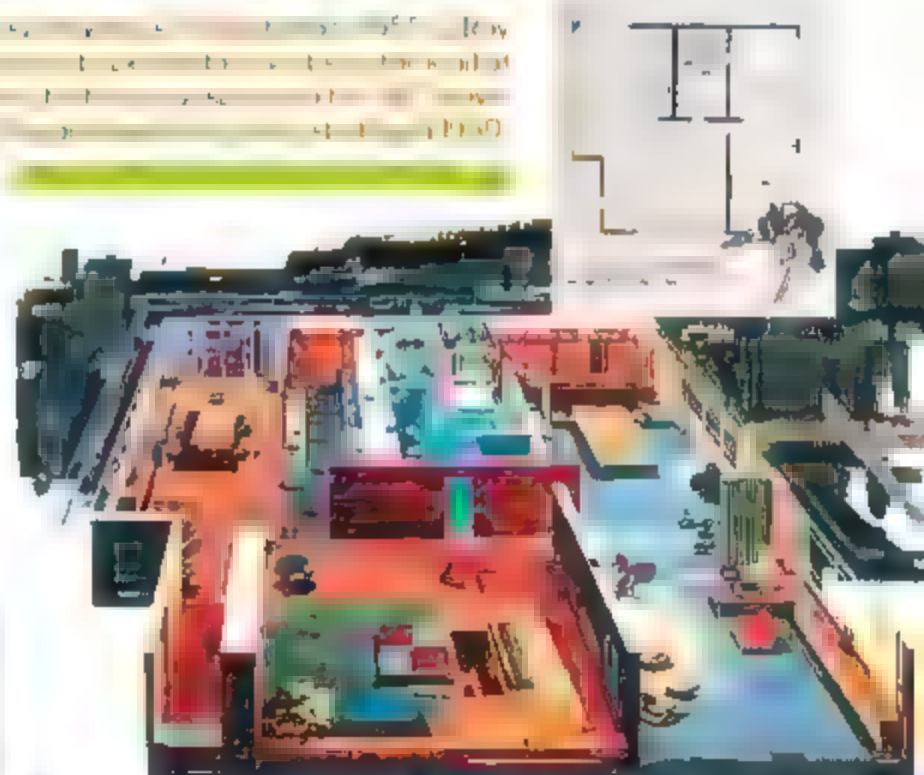
S. and Puffy C.) until we figured out a thing or two about the ways and means of Cool, which really wasn't much of a tangible concept or aspiration until the thick, principled dust of World War II was scattered to the wind and obtuse Atomic Age fatigue started spooking a populace that just, *oh please*, wanted to think about something else, like, perchance, better living and living better (and/or, like, *livin'*, apostrophe required, if you wish to follow the proper patois). Bombs and mushroom clouds, after all, were hot. Thus those who were prone to such sweaty panics yearned to lower their thermostats and saunter toward easy-breeziness, i.e., toward Cool, i.e., toward how one might begin to consider acquiring the pose and trappings of Cool amid the nicely timed fat flush of postwar prosperity. Of course Cool forbids asking for help and never more so than when seeking Cool: *thse f* You must appear, at the very least, to just sort of bump into it—maybe, possibly in the form of a brand-new upscale periodical that happened to prominently display well-bred females of the Next Door species casually undraped and intermingled with bright pages of brighter text suggesting slick methods of existential improvement (as in pads, threads, wheels, boîtes, liquids, solids, woofers, tweeters, gizmos, thngamabobs and, best of all, attitudes). Because, well, who would opt to look *there*, back *then*, for such unabashed, indisputable Rules of Cool, laid out monthly like serial installments of the Stone Tablets with staples? (This, by the way, is where a conspirator might wink would be good, if typeface could wink.)

Cool, however, is cagey that way, the most unobvious of art forms when exhibited properly—which lately it has been, museum-style (thus with true artistic license), in an iconic,





wide-ranging retro collection of expressive disciplines (painting, architecture, furniture design, photography, pop culture multimedia), titled *Birth of the Cool* (as borrowed from the landmark 1957 Miles Davis LP of the same name) and unveiled last fall at the Orange County Museum of Art in Newport Beach, California, from whence it has embarked on a selective travel circuit (dig it now in Oakland!). While tilted toward the sly sensibility of "California cool"—which *The New York Times*, upon appraising the mixed assemblage, described as "laid-back yet cleanly articulated...strict yet hedonistic and seriously playful"—there is also great evidence on display of a certain Chicago-honed influence (no surprise!), a generous pouring of vintage 1950s Hefneria (Lush PLAYBOY spreads, sleek video loops, etc.) stirred throughout the ready conflagration. Indeed, the savvy curator of it all inscribed Hef's personal copy of the elaborate accompanying exhibition catalog to merely "the midwife of Cool" (as in one who lovingly and instrumentally assists during a birthing process). And in said catalog, the instrumental one can be seen via classic photographs, coolly clenching pipe, brow furrowed lightly (*seriously playful*, natch) while innately elevating

[illegible]

תהי ארץ חקלאית ורעה
 ורעה ורעה ורעה ורעה



sybaritic aestheticism by way of just being a cat who wanted what most cats wanted before they ever knew they wanted it until he told them they did.

Wanting, of course, is the semisecret romantic crux of Playboy Cool. (Getting, of course, is just the gravy, and Having would equal utopia on earth.) Per this Wanting, though, let us turn counterclockwise so as to picture the postcollegiate mid-20-something Hef (no longer quite the buoyant Hep Hef he'd been dubbed in high school), who now suddenly found himself slightly soul deadened, trapped in colorless jobs, shackled in ill-fitting wedlock, seeking elusive moonbeams, wandering the Windy City late at night, staring up at glimmering apartment towers "and very much wanting to be part of the Good Life I thought the people in those buildings must be leading." This image, I will tell you, is the Essential Hef, the hungry tableau set against lonely, grim pavement (think Hef noir!) that led to all things beyond groovy. In the aforementioned catalog of *Cool*, essayist Thomas Hine puts forth many erudite derivations of that idealized state of Being, not least that "it was a response to alienation, but it became a mark of belonging." Well, hello, Hef—and come on in! "I wanted to be where it was happening—whatever 'it' was," Hef once famously recalled of that fabled raw-pining period, adding, "When I finally found out, of course, it wasn't what I thought it would be; it was infinitely better, unbelievably more exciting than I'd ever dreamed." Not to get too far ahead of ourselves, but that would be the journey's intended trajectory, to put it tastefully.

"We are Taste City," he crowed to *Time* eight years into empire building, having built that empire on decidedly citified taste. (Hine again, from the *Cool* catalog: "PLAYBOY was, from its beginning, a manual on showing taste and finding pleasure in a world of mass affluence.") But he never fully understood from whence his taste came, in that his prim Methodist middle-class-neighborhood upbringing was more bringdown, aesthetics-wise—an incubator of squareness squared. (Only his elective design classes at the University of Illinois, which he aced handily, seemed to point him toward the light.) He would say, "When I came out of college my tastes were very contemporary, and that held in terms of my own apartment. It was a Mies van der Rohe and Frank Lloyd Wright kind of architecture and the Hans Knoll-Herman Miller style of furnishings that most appealed to me. And you will find those tastes reflected in most of the magazine's early design pieces. They were simple, clean and contemporary." (As was, most pleasurably—and I say this after thoroughly navigating the impeccable, newly released digital archive *Playboy Cover to Cover: The 50s*—the sparse but

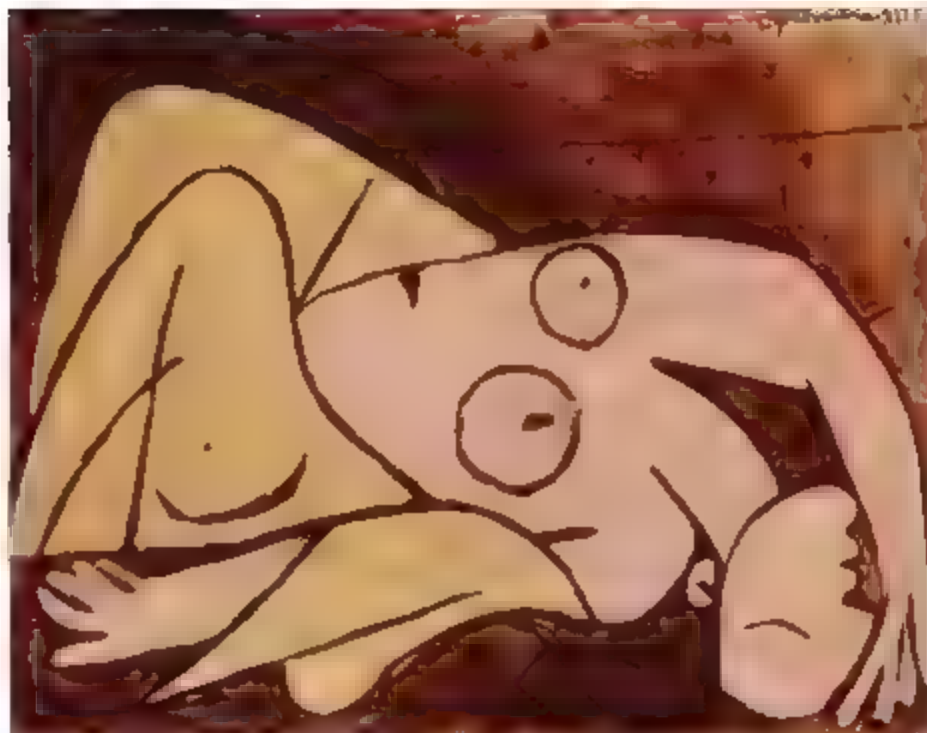


Illustration by the artist who designed the cover of the first issue of *Playboy* in 1953. The cover of the first issue of *Playboy* was designed by the artist who designed the cover of the first issue of *Playboy* in 1953.

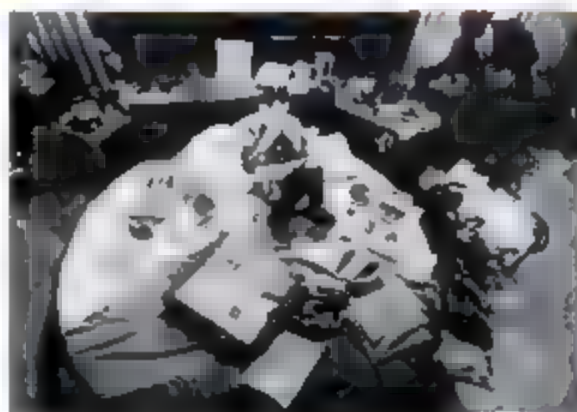


Illustration by the artist who designed the cover of the first issue of *Playboy* in 1953. The cover of the first issue of *Playboy* was designed by the artist who designed the cover of the first issue of *Playboy* in 1953.

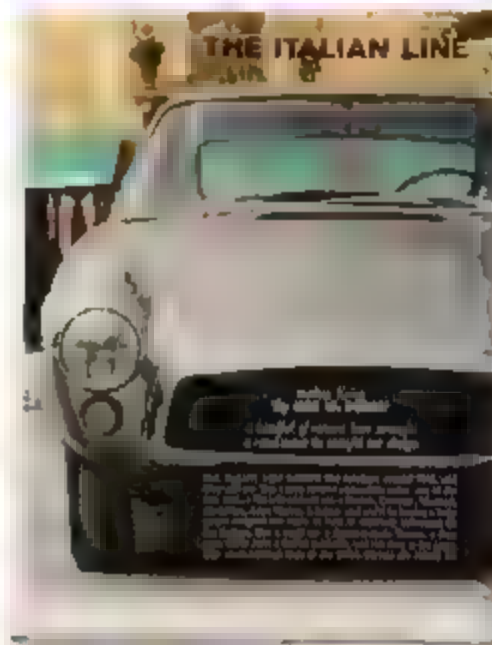


Illustration by the artist who designed the cover of the first issue of *Playboy* in 1953. The cover of the first issue of *Playboy* was designed by the artist who designed the cover of the first issue of *Playboy* in 1953.



THE PLAYBOY JAZZ POLL



bold modernist layouts energizing every page of the magazine from its 1953 inception to that seminal decade's end and onward, as rendered by the great art director Arthur Paul, Hef's chief co-avatar of visual Cool.)

The magazine
brimmed
with the
thrill of *acquis-*
itiveness
uninterruptus.

Now, about that apartment, which was his first (a mental nest, no less) and, not coincidentally, the cradle from which the debut issue of this magazine sprang. The avant-garde taste he imbued in those five humble rooms was all he had to stake toward his formidable dreams, which is to say the full \$600 he personally sank into the birth of *PLAYBOY* (abetted by a few more grand invested by chums) was borrowed against the forward-minded furniture he meticulously chose to decorate that singular pad. Besides the Hans Knoll tables and curvy Eames chairs, a joyous bohemian ethos pervaded (grass walls, bamboo shades, stippled floors, articulated lamps, Picasso reproductions, Saul Steinberg-esque cartoon wallpaper). Significantly, too, there was the broad crimson Eero Saarinen womb chair (his prized postcollege gift to himself!) in which he would strike an enduring snapshot pose while flaunting Volume One, Number One of the publication his deft interior stylings had helped make fiscally possible. Indeed, flushed with triumph, and taste, he quickly took an office space to create the second issue, whereupon, per the recollection of fond business associate Eldon Sellers, "Next thing I knew, Hef was putting in Herman Miller furniture, and I was kind of worried that he was spending too much too soon to make a show, to make an impression." On the other hand, how could he not? He'd already made sure the premiere issue boasted a sexy spread—20 pages past the one infamously devoted to an unclad Marilyn Monroe—heralding the progressive Herman Miller office line, with copy declaring that any business hip enough to install such would be perceived "as up-to-date as tomorrow, know where they're going and will use the most modern methods to get there." And this, you should know, was four years before Norman Mailer, in an eggheadish treatise on hipsterism for *Dissent* magazine, wrote, "To be cool is to be equipped, and if you are equipped it is more difficult for the next cat who comes along to put you down." If I may say so: Well, yeah, Dad

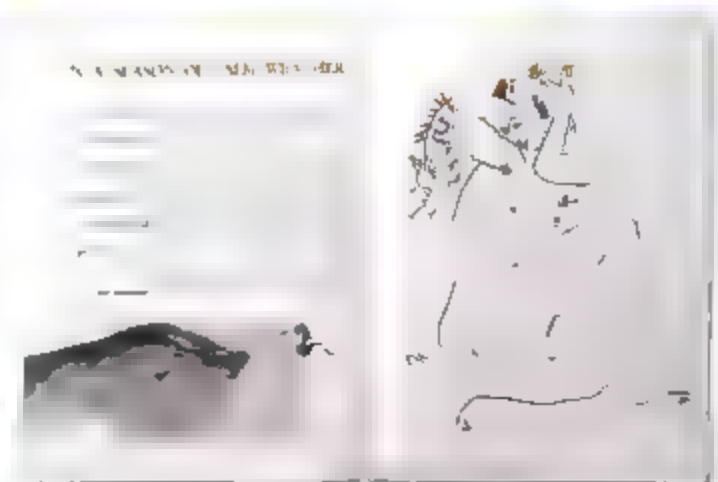
We are, after all, talking the Original Equip-o-torium-o-rama here—wherein mind-meid of man (editor-publisher-dreamer) and magazine brimmed with the thrill of *acquisitiveness uninterruptus*, pertaining as much to psychic suavity as to correctly outfitting the realm of swift move making. "The 1950s was the last decade when to be cool meant to be sophisticated," observed *Time.com* thinker Richard Corliss back when *PLAYBOY* hit its half-century mark. "Hefner promoted the religion of urbanity, or, as *Newsweek* tagged it, Urbunnity. And apparently many of his readers enjoyed imagining themselves as the Hefner male." Hefner males, in case you wondered, were not especially prone to the fresh-air imaginings of spelunking or rappelling or splashyacking as forked up by other testosterone journals, thank you. Brawn need never apply, because smooth was all, kind of like the lacquered seat of a perfect Eames lounge. "We don't mind telling you in advance—we plan on spending most of our time inside," wrote Hef in the silken preface to issue one, promulgating a shared ownership of his civilized new frontier of languor, a.k.a. the Great Indoors. He went on, legendarily, "We like our apartment." (How about, per above, like it like crazy?) "We enjoy mixing up cocktails and an hors d'oeuvre or two, putting a little mood music on the phonograph and inviting in a female acquaintance for a quiet discussion on Picasso, Nietzsche, jazz, sex." As go purning Cool Cat manifestos, none shall ever measure up to that, I dare submit.

(continued on page 112)

Hefner's editors, with the
good of the magazine
in mind, had to choose
the best of the best
for inventing new ideas.



...and it was the first time
...the first time...
...the first time...
...the first time...
...the first time...

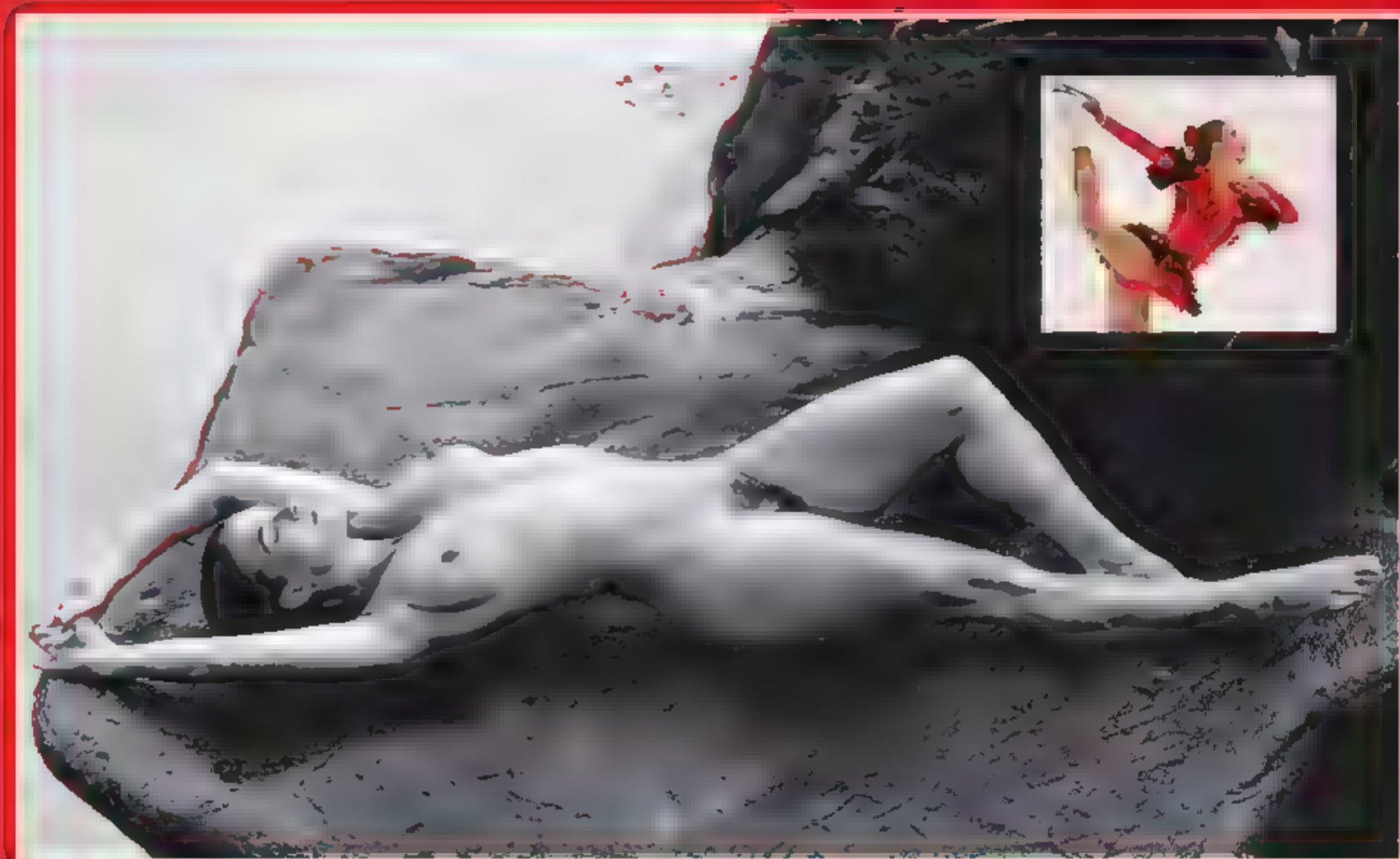


PLAYBOY'S OLYMPIC HALL OF FAME

They gave their all for their countries. They bared all for us. Let the Games begin!

The Olympic motto is "Faster, higher, stronger." We've gotten on for a fourth adjective: hotter. Today's sporty ladies are raising the bar and looking good doing it. Such is the case with high jumper **AMY ACUFF**, a PLAYBOY cover girl prior to the 2004 Games. In Athens she was crowned a medal in dramatic fashion. With the clock ticking on her final jump, Amy had to wait for some relay racers to get out of her way; she tried to clear six feet eight and one-quarter inches and finished in fourth place. In February she sent us a note of thanks. Playboy publicity, she says, helped the team secure training facilities and a coach. "My chances are the best they can possibly be," she wrote, "and Playboy has a part in that."





KATARINA WITT **AMANDA BEARD**
 Katarina Witt, a two-time Olympic champion, is a former figure skater who has since turned to swimming. She is also a former Olympic champion. Amanda Beard, a two-time Olympic champion, is a former figure skater who has since turned to swimming. She is also a former Olympic champion.



FUNNY HATS

FLACCID BALLOONS



★ and ★
Mayor Daley's Finger

By Paul Slansky

WHENEVER THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE GATHER IN AN ENCLOSED SPACE, SOME JEERINESS IS BOUND TO ENSUE. WHEN THOSE THOUSANDS ARE POLITICIANS, THE JEERINESS INCREASES EXPONENTIALLY. WITH THIS YEAR'S POLITICAL CONVENTIONS ALMOST UPON US, HERE'S A REVIEW OF PREVIOUS HIGHLIGHTS—OR, RATHER, LOWLIGHTS.

1. Complete Chicago mayor Richard Daley's statement after the riots outside the 1968 Democratic National Convention: "The policeman isn't there to create disorder. The policeman is there to ____."

- A create order out of chaos.
- B beat the shit out of people.
- C preserve disorder

2. At the 1988 GOP convention, what did Dan Quayle say was "the real question" of the upcoming Bush-Dukakis contest?

- A "Whether this is going to be the country of the pledge of allegiance or the United States of—of Willie Hortonland!"
- B "Whether we're going to go forward to tomorrow or past to the—to the back!"
- C "Whether we're going to have a short gloomy president or a—a tall giddy one!"



3. What omen presaged the candidacies of Jimmy Carter in 1980 and John Kerry in 2004?

- A Each found a dead squirrel in his suitcase.
- B Each was stricken with an intestinal flu on the eve of his acceptance speech.
- C Each was victimized by an impotent balloon tickle following his acceptance speech.

4. Complete this statement by a Republican Party official explaining why U.S. treasurer Katherine Ortega was chosen to deliver the keynote speech at



the 1984 convention: "Ortega wasn't chosen because she's a woman. She was chosen because ____."

- A she's not a man
- B she's unbelievably knowledgeable about the economy.
- C she's a Hispanic.

5. How did Jimmy Carter refer to former VP Hubert Horatio Humphrey at the 1980 Democratic convention?

- A "Hubert Horatio Alger"
- B "Hubert Horatio Hornblower"
- C "Humbert Humbert."

6. Which Republican told NBC's Maria Shriver, "We are America. These other people are not America"?

- A Culture warrior Pat Buchanan at the 1992 convention.
- B Party chairman Richard Bond in 1992
- C Nominee Bob Dole in 1996

7. In which state did George McGovern's 1972 acceptance speech run live in prime time?

- A New York
- B California
- C Hawaii.

8. What bizarre promise did Walter Mondale make in accepting the 1984 Democratic nomination?

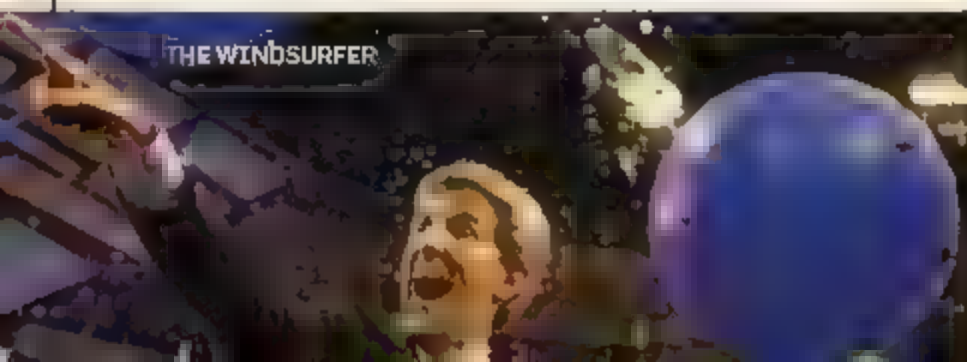
- A To reinstate the draft.
- B To raise taxes
- C To appoint Jesse Jackson ambassador to Israel

9. Who gave a big hug from behind to an extremely uncomfortable-looking Richard Nixon at the 1972 Republican convention in Miami?

- A Sammy Davis Jr.
- B Charlton Heston.
- C Elvis Presley



THE WINDSURFER



10.

11. What was the big story of the 1980 GOP convention in Detroit?

- A Ronald Reagan tried to persuade former president Gerald Ford to be his running mate
- B George Bush sulked when he thought he'd been passed over for the vice presidential nomination.
- C No delegates were murdered.

12. At the 1968 GOP convention in Miami, what did Richard Nixon say would differentiate his campaign from his losing 1960 effort?

- A "This time we're going to win."
- B "This time I'm going to shave before the debates."
- C "This time my running mate is going to be a bribe-taking cretin."

13. What did Ronald Reagan's supporters do when it became clear he had lost the 1976 Republican nomination?

- A On a signal from the podium, they took off their Reagan buttons and put on Ford buttons.
- B They walked out of the convention in protest.
- C They blew on long plastic horns, making horrible cowlike noises for three quarters of an hour.

14. What happened mere hours before Bill Clinton accepted the nomination at the 1996 Democratic convention in Chicago?

- A He and Hillary got into a fight that ended when she threw a cup at him and narrowly missed his nose.
- B His chief advisor, Dick Morris, resigned after his relationship with a prostitute was revealed.
- C He got a blow job from Monica Lewinsky

16. How did Barry Goldwater explain his choice of party chairman William Miller as his running mate at the 1964 Republican convention in San Francisco?

- A "He's the most qualified man I could find."
- B "He seemed to really want it."
- C "He bugs [Lyndon] Johnson."

17. What did Lyndon Johnson say to Hubert Humphrey before announcing him to the 1964 Democratic convention in Atlantic City as his running mate?

- A "Miller bugs me. You deal with him."
- B "If you didn't know you were going to be vice president a month ago, maybe you're too damn dumb to have the office."
- C "Just you remember, I've got your balls in my pocket, so don't make me crush 'em."

18. Which first-lady-to-be tripped and fell while going to her seat at the 1980 Republican convention?

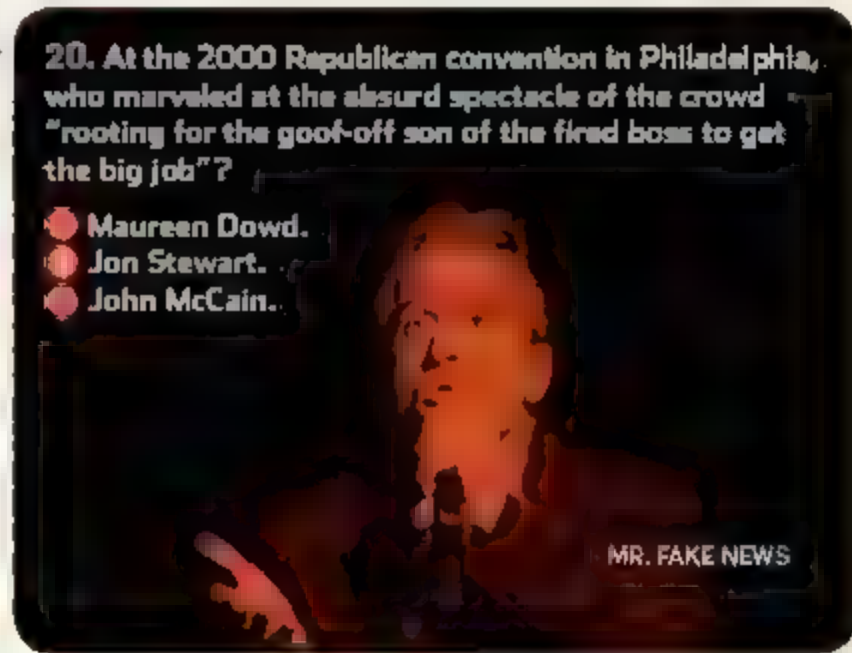
- A Barbara Bush
- B Laura Bush.
- C Nancy Reagan

19. What event shared the banner headlines announcing the 1984 nomination of Walter Mondale?

- A The discovery of a polyp in Ronald Reagan's intestine.
- B The death of a famous proponent of the health benefits of running, caused by a heart attack he suffered while jogging
- C The slaughter of 21 people in a San Diego McDonald's.

20. At the 2000 Republican convention in Philadelphia, who marveled at the absurd spectacle of the crowd "rooting for the goof-off son of the fired boss to get the big job"?

- Maureen Dowd.
- Jon Stewart.
- John McCain.



15.





21. At the 1964 Republican convention, what epithet did a rabid female Goldwater supporter shout at the recently divorced and remarried governor Nelson Rockefeller?

- A "You lousy loser!"
- B "You lousy liberal!"
- C "You lousy lover!"

22. What insults did Gore Vidal and William F. Buckley Jr. exchange

while covering the 1968 Democratic convention on ABC?

- A "Crypto Nazi" and "queer."
- B "Sesquipedalian fascist" and "flaming faggot."
- C "Stinkpot" and "pooh-pooh head."

23. What faux pas did Ronald Reagan commit at the 1988 Republican convention?

- A He meant to say "Facts are stubborn things," but it came out "Facts are stupid things."
- B Barbara Bush, he said near an open mike, "looks more like George's mother than his wife."
- C Referring to George Bush's declaration "Read my lips. No new taxes," he told ABC's Sam Donaldson, "It's kind of funny because George barely has any lips."



24. After his official nomination in 1988, how did an exuberant Michael Dukakis react?

- A He bounded around the room, kissing and hugging all in sight.
- B He pumped his fist and shouted, "Yes!"
- C He waved away a glass of champagne.

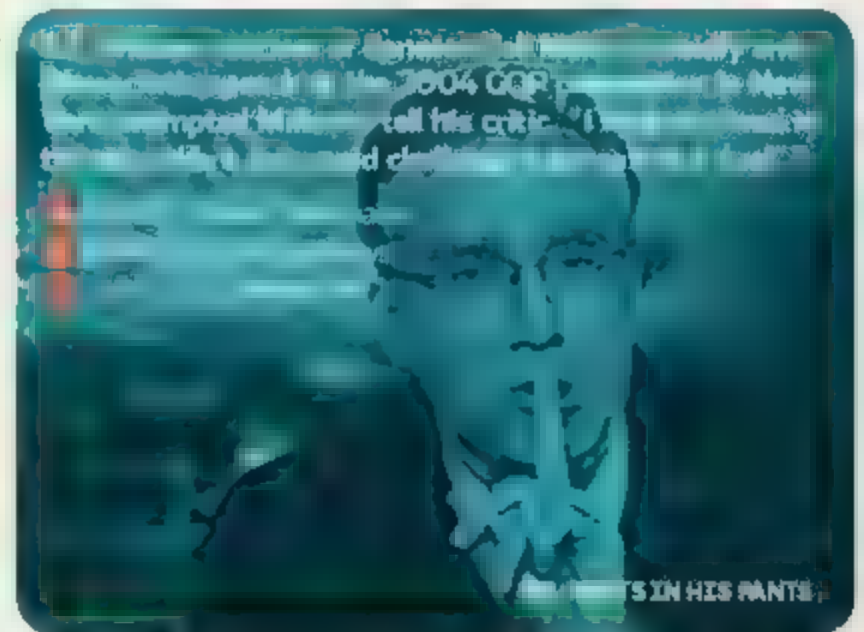


25. What did Dukakis do after the 1988 Democratic convention ended?

- A He squandered his surge in popularity by taking a long vacation and failing to respond to vicious attacks.
- B He began searching for a tank to ride around in.
- C He went windsurfing.

26. What did Richard Nixon reminisce about in his 1968 acceptance speech?

- A Breaking into his law school dean's office to find out his grades.
- B Driving Pat to and from her dates with other men.
- C Hearing distant trains from his childhood bed.



28. At the 1968 Democratic convention, which reporter who was forcibly removed by security personnel signed off by saying he was "somewhere in custody"?

- A Dan Rather
- B John Chancellor
- C Mike Wallace

29. What did Nancy Reagan say was her husband's criterion for picking his 1980 running mate?

- A "Anyone but that simpering Bush fellow."
- B "The one who can eat the most jelly beans."
- C "Someone who's already been president and vice president but was elected to neither post."



30. At the 1988 Republican convention, a newspaper reporter asked George W. Bush, "When you're not talking about politics, what do you and your father talk about?" What did he answer?

- A "Baseball."
- B "Well, sometimes it's about getting his friends to bail me out of another business fiasco, and sometimes it's about what a sadistic little prick I am."
- C "Pussy."

ANSWERS

1. (a) 2. (b) 3. (a) 4. (b) 5. (a) 6. (b) 7. (a) 8. (b) 9. (a) 10. (b) 11. (a) 12. (a) 13. (a) 14. (b) 15. (a) 16. (a) 17. (b) 18. (a) 19. (a) 20. (a) 21. (a) 22. (a) 23. (a) 24. (b) 25. (a) 26. (c) 27. (b) 28. (b) 29. (b) 30. (c)



*"You did Shakespeare in the park? Well, last week
I did him in the barn."*



Doll Face is what the closest of Kayla Collins's friends call her, but that hasn't freed her from the burden of working for her daily bread, or ice cream. "I've worked at ice cream shops since I was 14," she says, which has given her certain insights into what her customers prefer. "I'm sure men had fantasies about their little Friendly's waitress," she says. "Now I'm going to confirm them all."

The 21-year-old aspiring property flipper moved to California after three years at Penn State. "I probably finish school out here because I love the beach and always wanted to live in California," says Kayla, who grew up in Pennsylvania farm country. "Everybody wore cowboy hats and drove pickup trucks to school. A good student and a cheerleader, Kayla also danced for 11 years—tap, jazz, hip-hop and some ballet. "Everybody seems amazed by my flexibility. I can put my feet completely over my head, no problem."

As you take a moment to file that image away forever in your long-term memory, let's recap: blonde, beautiful, smart, whipped-cream enthusiast and flexible marvel. No wonder Playmate scout extraordinaire Holly Madison encouraged Miss August to try out. "I added her as a friend on MySpace, and she sent me a message," says Kayla.

"I just wanted to come out and meet her, and it turned into taking some Polaroids, doing a test shoot and taping an episode of *The Girls Next Door*. I wrote in my friend's school yearbook,

"You'll see me in the pages of *PLAYBOY*. It's really cool because I'm living out my dream." Kayla had modeled previously but never posed nude until now. "I look better naked than in lingerie," she says. Her boyfriend would surely agree. If she had one, he'd love to be in a relationship. There are so many guys in L.A., but where are the good ones? I haven't found my soulmate yet, but I think there is one person you're supposed to be with. I'm a hopeless romantic."

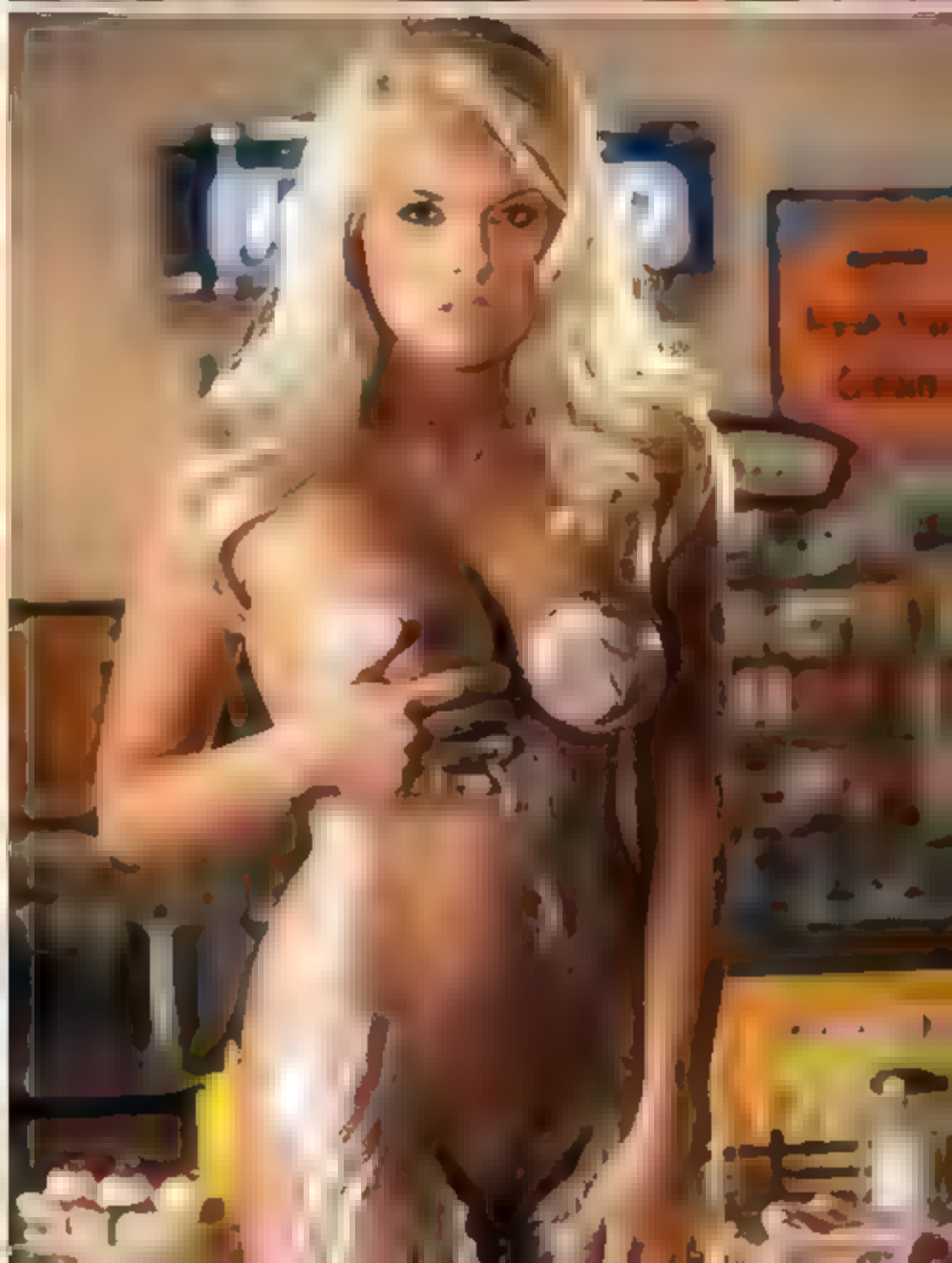
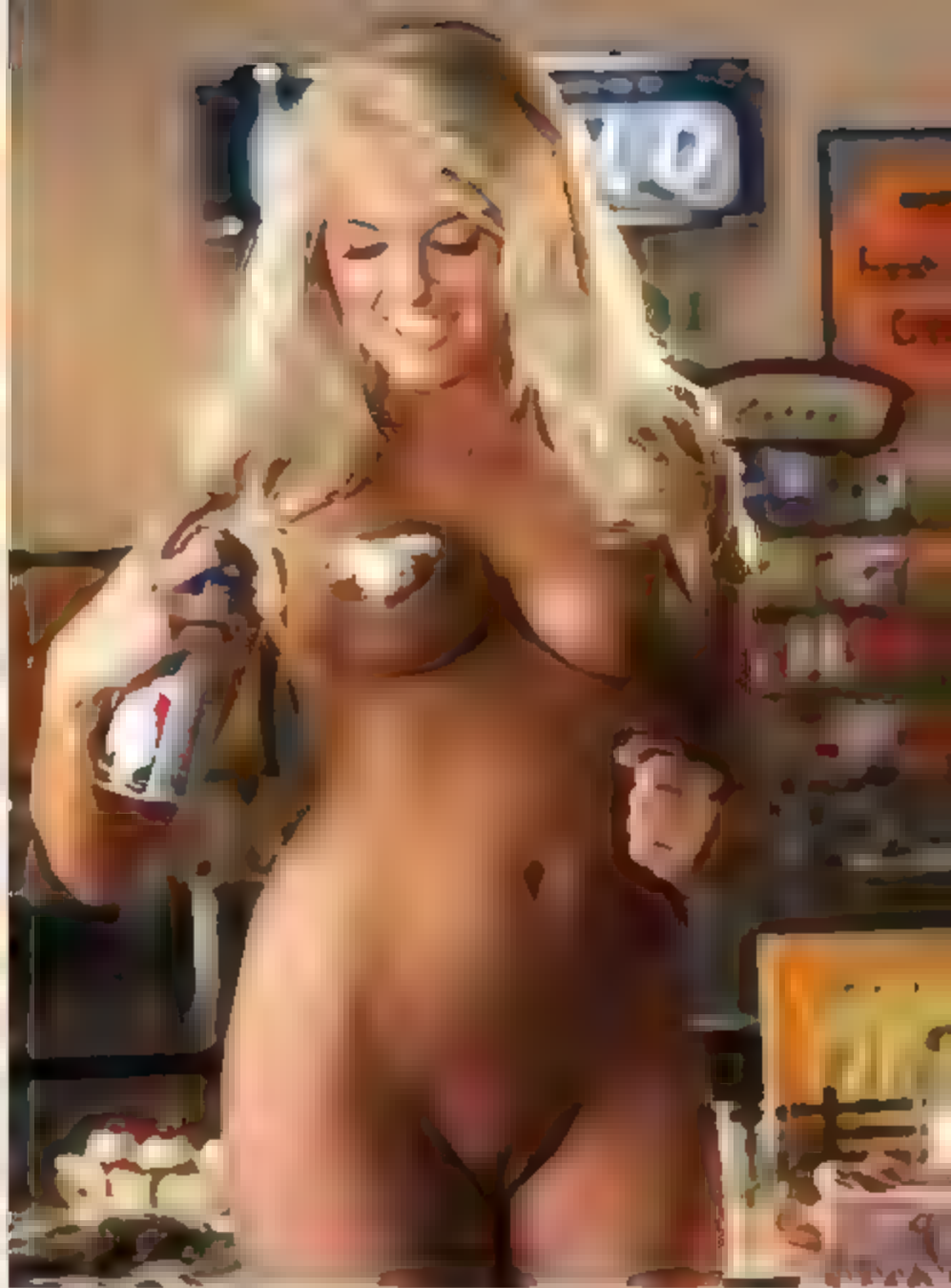
COZY UP TO

Miss August
is single
and sizzling

Kayla









See more of Miss August at cyberpayboy.com



MISS AUGUST

MISS AUGUST'S FAVORITE OF THE MONTH

Miss August





Kanga Collins.

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Kayla Collins

BUST: 34 WAIST: 24 HIPS: 34

HEIGHT: 5'2" WEIGHT: 105

BIRTH DATE: 4/1/1987 BIRTHPLACE: Reading, PA

AMBITIONS: To further my careers in modeling and acting, become a host of a TV show or maybe the next St. Pauli Girl spokesmodel. ☺

TURN-ONS: A great personality is most important, along with confidence and independence. A nice smile, eyes and body are pluses!!

TURNOFFS: Bad breath, laziness and cockiness. Someone who won't give me my space in the beginning of a relationship.

PEOPLE I IDOLIZE: My mom and my dad.

A GUILTY PLEASURE OF MINE: Ben & Jerry's Cherry Garcia Low Fat Frozen Yogurt ... YUM ☺

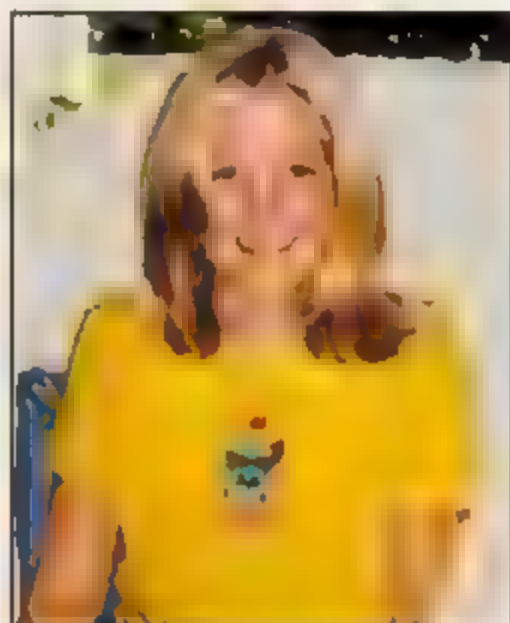
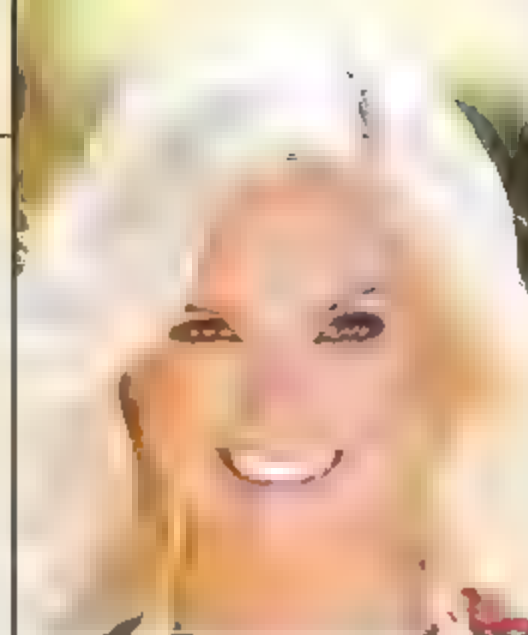
WHAT I MISS MOST ABOUT PENNSYLVANIA: The change of seasons.

IF I HAD MORE TIME I WOULD: Answer all my fan mail on MySpace!

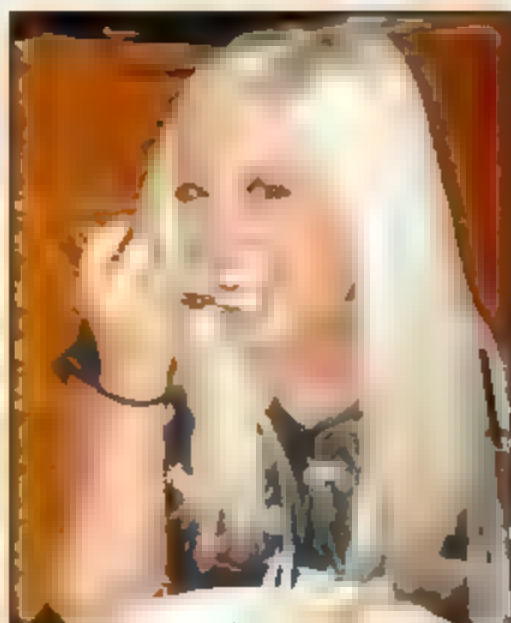
MY FAVORITE OUTDOOR ACTIVITY: Anything that involves sunshine!

FIVE TV PROGRAMS I TRY TO CATCH: THE GIRLS NEXT DOOR!!!

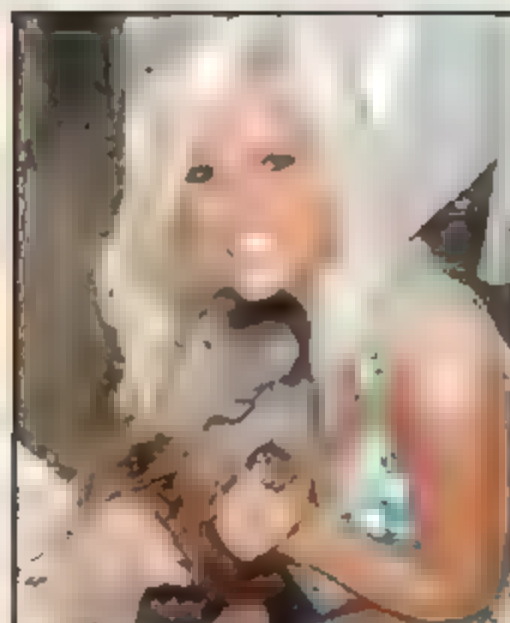
The Hills, MTV Cribs, Gossip Girl and Prison Break.



Me at 11 years old in the sunroom.



Me on my birthday... mmm, ice cream!!



19 years old in Shartlesville, PA. I ♥ animals !!



MISS AUGUST

MISS AUGUST

LIVE

0790

Kayla Collins

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

As his last action in the White House, lame-duck president George W. Bush will mandate that all gas stations play porn at the pump so you can see someone else getting screwed the same time you are.

A gay man had stopped for a red light when he was rear-ended by a big 18-wheeler.

The furious man left his car, walked back to the truck and started screaming, "I'm going to sue you!"

The truck driver said, "Blow me!"

The gay man stopped for a second and then said, "So you want to settle out of court?"



An executive had to take a business trip overseas, so he entrusted his assistant with the job of keeping an eye on his wife. If anything out of the ordinary should occur, the assistant was to notify him immediately.

After a week with no contact, the businessman received an e-mail that read, "The man who comes to visit your wife every night didn't show up yesterday."

My doctor says if I don't give up sex, I'll be dead in a week," a man told his friend.

"Why is that?" the friend asked.

"Because," the man replied, "I'm playing around with his wife."

I think we should go dutch," a woman said to her date. "You pay for dinner and the movie, and the rest of your night can be on me."

Two big-shot lawyers hired a secretary from a small town in the hills. She was attractive but obviously knew nothing about city life.

"She's so young and pretty she may be taken advantage of by some of those fast talking city guys," one attorney said to the other. "Why don't we teach her what's right and what's wrong?"

"Great idea," said the partner. "You teach her what's right."

Why do 99 percent of girls have a bigger left breast?

Because 99 percent of guys are right handed.

The only time politicians tell the truth is when they call each other liars.

As a man entered a bar to meet a friend he noticed two pretty girls looking at him.

"Nine," one whispered.

Feeling pleased with himself, he swaggered over to his buddy and reported that a girl had just rated him a nine out of 10.

"I don't want to ruin it for you," his friend said, "but when I walked in they were speaking German."

What do you call two hookers who testify on behalf of their pimp?

Support hos.

A man was talking to a woman in a bar. "I have a 10-inch cock," he boasted.

"Well," she answered, "I find that hard to swallow."

A blonde and a brunette were standing in an elevator. A man with dandruff walked in. The brunette said, "Somebody needs to give him some Head & Shoulders."

The blonde asked, "How do you give shoulders?"



A woman visited a psychiatrist. "I am a nymphomaniac," she said. "Can you help me?"

"Yes," he replied. "But my fee is \$200 an hour."

"Okay," she said. "How much for all night?"

Two tipsy Irishmen were in a cemetery, searching for the oldest person buried there. One of the men yelled out, "Here's a fella who died when he was 145 years old!"

"What was his name?" asked the other.

The first responded, "Miles, from Dublin."

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or by e-mail through our website at jokes.playboy.com. PLAYBOY will pay \$100 to the contributors whose submissions are selected.



"Mommy, Mommy—Skippy's found Daddy!"

Josh Peck

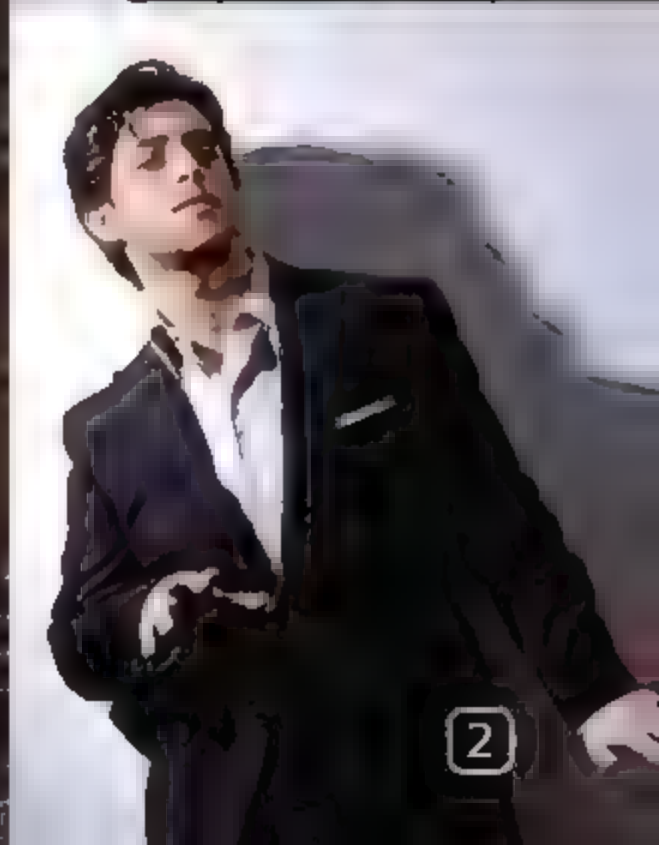
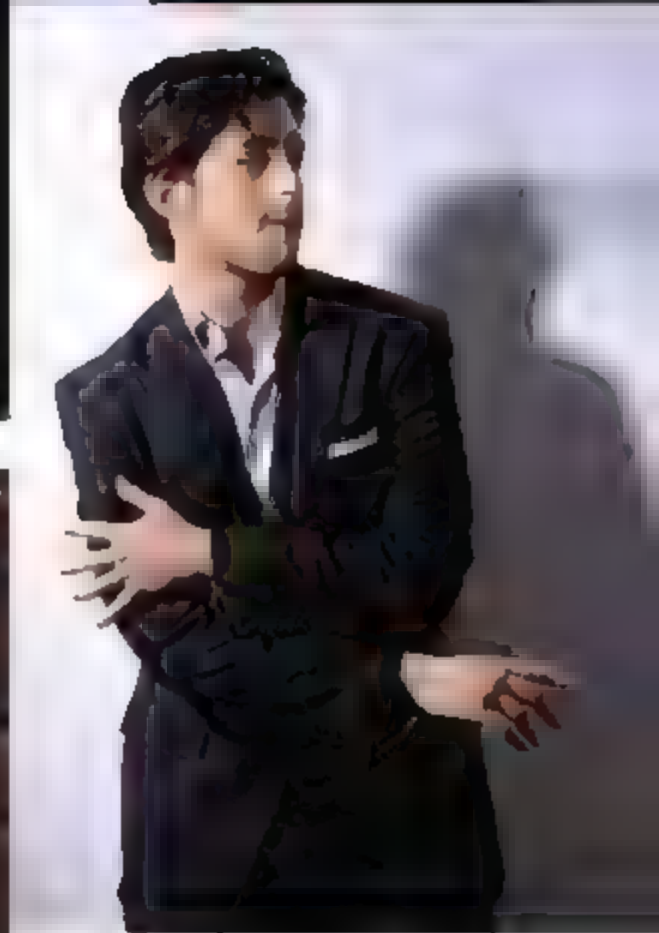
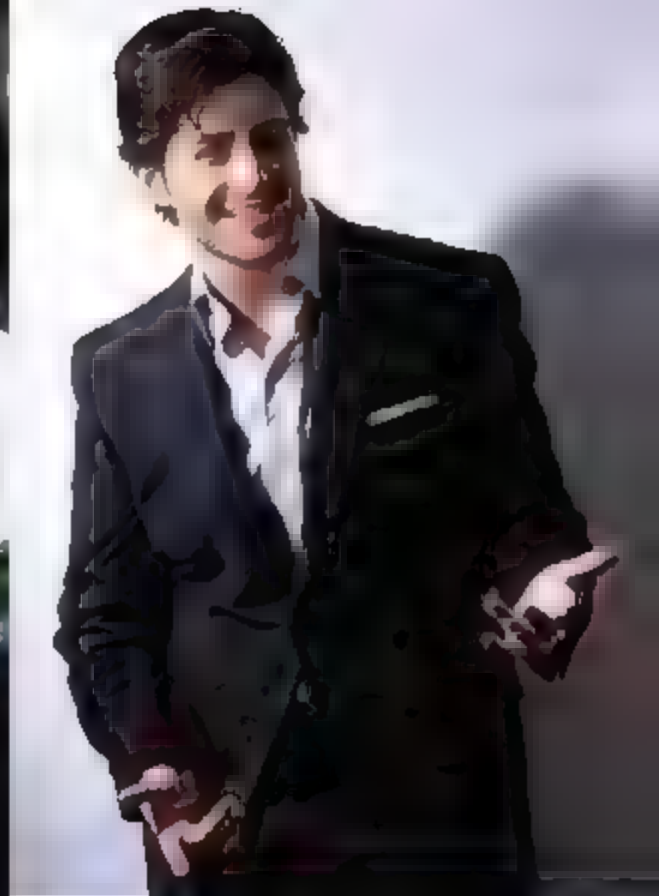
A YOUNG STAR GRADUATES FROM SNEAKERS TO SUITS FOR HIS BREAKOUT FILM

The perilous road between children's television and the big screen seldom ends at the superstar level of a Shia LaBeouf. Fortunately for 21-year-old Josh Peck, he had a knight at his side as he sought the career-longevity grail. Sir Ben Kingsley co-stars with Peck in *The Wackness*, an indie flick about the relationship between a small-time pot dealer (Peck) and a depressed psychiatrist (Kingsley) in 1990s New York City. According to Peck, the Oscar-winning actor was his biggest supporter. "The first time I met Sir Ben," says Peck, "he walked up to me, gave me a hug and said, 'You didn't choose this part, this part chose you.'" As his Nickelodeon tween vehicle *Drake & Josh* disappears in the rearview mirror, Peck's style is maturing too, even if he isn't always the one calling the shots. "I let the females in my life take control of big fashion choices," says the native New Yorker. "Sneakers are the only decision I still make. These days they're either Nikes or Bathing Apes. I'm up to about 40 or 50 pairs."



"IF MY FEMALE FANS WERE THE SAME AGE AS ME, I WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF."

Peck's suit (\$1,095) and shirt (\$125) are by JOHN VARVATOS STAR USA. His pocket square (three for \$15) is by GEOFFREY BEENE.







SELMA BLAIR

THE HELLBOY HOTTIE TALKS ABOUT THOSE GIRL-ON-GIRL KISSING SCENES WE LOVE SO MUCH AND INSISTS WITH A STRAIGHT FACE THAT SHE'S THE FLATTEST WOMAN IN HOLLYWOOD

Q 1

PLAYBOY You've starred in movies like *Legally Blonde*, *The Fog* and *Hellboy*, but how does it feel knowing fans would love nothing better than to see you kiss Sarah Michelle Gellar again the way you do in *Cruel Intentions*?

BLAIR It's insane how big an impression that kiss has made. It's the one thing people remember me for. No matter what their age, they say "Oh my God, you're that girl from *Cruel Intentions* who kissed Sarah Michelle Gellar!" I'm flattered. I think it was the first girl-on-girl kiss in a popular mainstream American film, so it broke the door down.

Q 2

PLAYBOY In a short story you wrote for the erotic anthology *Stirring Up a Storm*, the main character enjoys sexual thoughts about a beautiful young woman she happens to see one day. Are we detecting a trend here?

BLAIR The assignment was to write an erotic story, and I don't have an erotic bone in my body, so I thought, just go the girl-on-girl way. Now that I think of it though, I have done three girl-on-girl kisses on screen: *Cruel Intentions* and *Feast of Love*, and I just finished *Driving Lessons*, in which I kiss a young girl. I didn't realize I had done so much lesbian exploration, yet I've never done any in my real life. Gay women do hit on me a lot,

though. When lesbian friends tell me they're in love with me after our friendship has been cemented, it always shocks me. Why would they think I'm gay, except maybe because I'm open, loving and don't mind gayness at all?

Q 3

PLAYBOY You just said—jokingly, we hope—you don't have an erotic bone in your body. We beg to differ. Don't you think you're sexy?

BLAIR I do feel like a sexual being but not especially when compared with other people. While I was making *The Sweetest Thing* with Cameron Diaz and Christina Applegate, I felt like a different species. They're such girly girls—adorable, endearing, typical blonde, beautiful-figured women—whereas I'm a brunette tomboy. I'm kind of missing the gene that immediately endears people to me, but that's okay.

Q 4

PLAYBOY You've done offbeat movies like *Storytelling* and others like *Cruel Intentions* that enjoy a huge cult following. But what movie plays closest to what it's like inside your head?

BLAIR *Cruel Intentions* holds up after all these years, so it's okay to have it as a guilty pleasure. It paved the way for everything on

TV now. It opened people up to how good teenage stories can be. But sadly, inside my head it's more like Woody Allen's *Interiors* or Bob Rafelson's *Five Easy Pieces*—lonely movies with strong imagery and something a little off. I don't have a lot of the teen-genre spirit in me, which is funny because that's pretty much all I've been playing the past 10 years.

Q 5

PLAYBOY *A Dirty Shame*, which John Waters directed, strays pretty far from the teen genre. Do you know there are Internet threads debating whether your freakishly massive breasts in that movie are real?

BLAIR I remember some people were shocked when they thought I would self-figure myself like that for a movie. I thought, People are daft. I mean, those breasts are gargantuan. Hideous. Nobody would find them attractive—well, okay, maybe two people out there would be fascinated by them. No, I wouldn't do that to myself in real life. I remain the flattest woman in Hollywood.

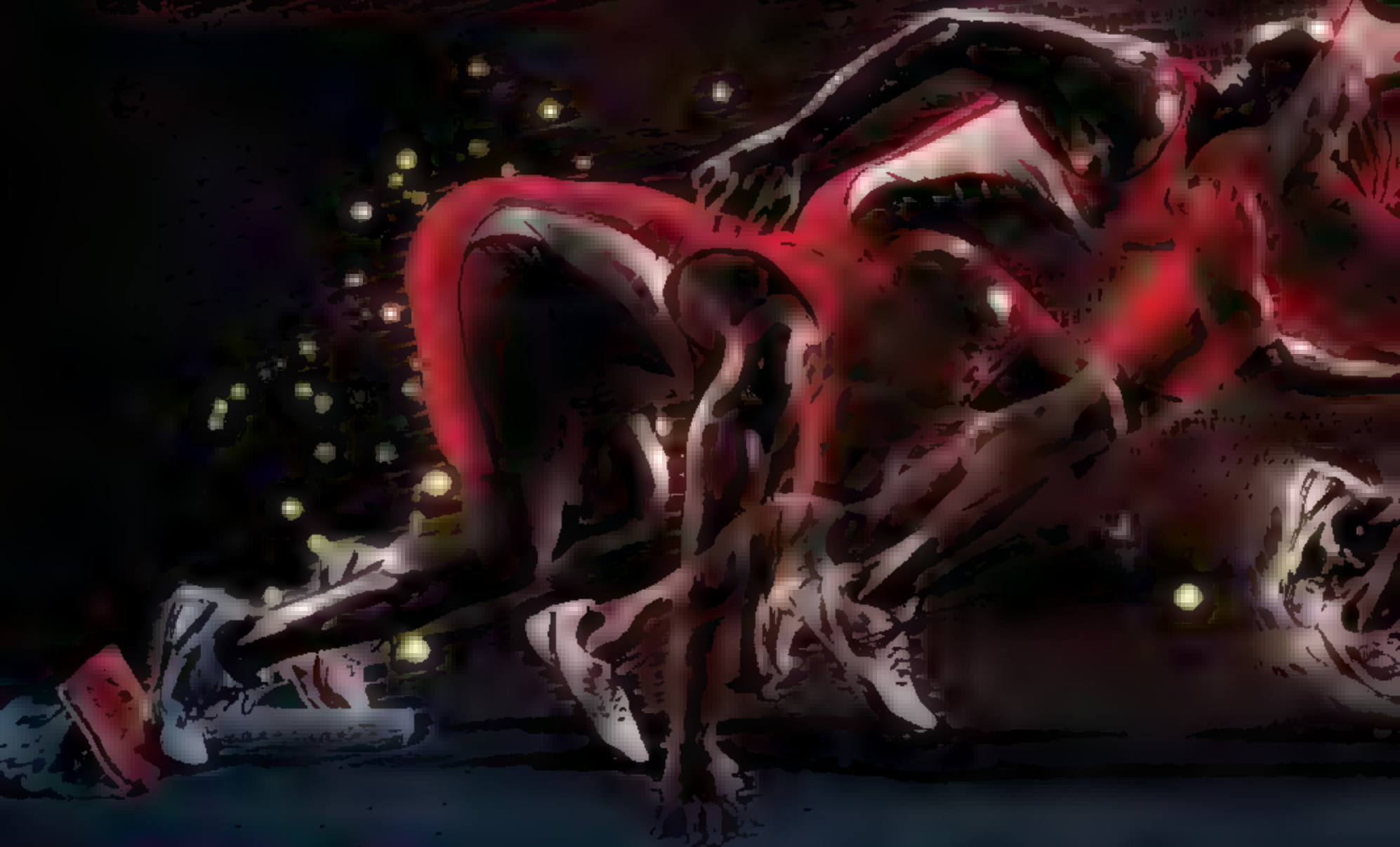
Q 6

PLAYBOY Growing up, how did you deal with the crap you must have been handed for being named Selma?

BLAIR, I've always (concluded on page 110)

THE PERFECT SPRINT

ALL THE SCIENCE, COACHING AND TRAINING
IT TAKES TO GUN FOR THE GOLD.



BY JONATHAN TURMAN



When it comes to the summer Olympics, no event commands our attention like the oldest sport in the world—the flat-out sprint, a competition of pure foot speed. The winners of the 100-, 200- and 400-meter races will be hailed as the fastest humans alive. Their performances will last mere seconds, yet these bursts of speed are built on years upon years of preparation.

Beginning in late 2006 I was privileged to observe several of the world's greatest sprinters to examine their philosophy, training and motivation. I studied the solitary strategy employed by Jeremy Warner, along with the team



philosophy espoused by coach John Smith, his champion Maurice Greene—who was attempting a comeback—and Smith's best hope for gold in the 100 meters in Beijing, Torri Edwards. I sought out and met the legendary gold medalist Michael Johnson. I enlisted biomechanics experts to help unravel the mysterious code of speed. My search took me to Los Angeles, to Waco, Texas and to Kansas City, Kansas, where I stood before the church where Maurice Greene first raced in his Sunday best. Along the way I came to understand the science and nature of what's behind those few explosive seconds you see on TV—the rigorous training and coaching it takes to run for the gold.





ail 2006 Fog has given way to hazy sunshine this first day of November, opening practice in a new season for one of the greatest pools of genetically blessed athletes on the planet. The setting is the tattered West Los Angeles College track. By chance, the football field is crowded with more than 100 men in prison-gray shirts, trying out for the Arena Football League team the Los Angeles Avengers. But no one would confuse these football players with the elegant creatures winding their way around the track. They walk the turn—a dozen men, a handful of women—and then take flight.

Hair flecked with gray, John Smith is a commanding coach. The tall, trim 56-year-old moves with the pride of a man whose world record in the 440-yard dash is now in its 37th year. Though there is warmth in the lean contours of his brown face, his eyes can burn. Impeccably attired in fashionable athletic wear, Smith takes a seat on a ledge by the track under the shade of some pines, ministering to his fresh-faced sprint disciples. He gestures to the entrance. "When you walk through there, this is your utopia. You are able to create whatever you want," he says. He presses closer. "Your smallest focus is your greatest freedom. Everything we'll talk about has nothing to do with anything but life. It is all the same."

It's hard not to gawk. Sheathed in thick sweats, stands the rock-hard Maurice Greene, the 2000 Olympic gold medalist and 2004 silver medalist, a man who once lowered the world record in the 100 meters by the biggest margin since the advent of electronic timing: one half of one tenth of a second, to 9.79. His head rolls playfully with his hips as he jokes with a teammate, a diamond stud flashing in his ear. His sculpted face is punctuated by hooded eyes and high cheekbones, and he moves with the sleepy, muscular sway of a lion. Tattooed on his bulging biceps is the acronym GOAT—Greatest of All Time. Already considered among the top two or three best sprinters in history, he is searching for one more Olympic triumph. For four years straight, Greene was ranked number one in the world in the 100 meters. But he is 32. They say he is finished. He promises he will prove the naysayers wrong at the Olympics.

This morning I get the chance to witness a rare thing in sports. Smith's troupe is an ongoing experiment, a classic team approach to this most individ-

ual of sports. Smith is the coach and spiritual center of HSI International, nicknamed Handling Speed Intelligently, a soup to nuts southern California-based sports-management firm founded by Smith and the agent Emanuel Hudson. HSI trains and represents nearly two dozen elite professional sprinters and hurdlers (plus a handful of football and tennis players). Smith's athletes have won at least 13 gold, 10 silver and 10 bronze Olympic medals and 14 world championships. Of the roughly 350 sub-10-second 100-meter performances in history, Smith has coached more than 100 of them.

break the huddle, every one of them some shade of brown. Smith and virtually every other sprint coach believe the fastest humans originate in west Africa. Studies have shown they have a far higher percentage of the muscle fibers necessary to sprint exceptionally fast. Just as the world's greatest long-distance runners (East Africans) are blessed with a high percentage of slow-twitch fibers, elite sprinters seem to have a far greater percentage of fast-twitch fibers. Fast-twitch muscle contracts faster and more forcefully. It's a gift of nature.

"All right, let's go to work," growls

"I TOOK MY DEEP BREATH. FIREWORKS WERE GOING OFF INSIDE. I WAS THINKING, I CAN DO IT NOW!"

(Greene alone has broken the vaunted barrier more than 50 times.)

"Come on, everybody!" Smith hollers, the hard work about to begin. The runners huddle, heads bent, palms piling on top of one another. It is an eclectic mix. Here comes Leonard Scott, the barrel-chested former college football standout, a man with a stone jaw and a look of quiet determination who recently clocked a swift 9.91 in the 100. The gracefully shy, eaglelike Torri Edwards stands just five-foot-four, an elegant woman with a 100-meter world-champion title on her résumé. Hollywood-cool Willie Gault, the blazingly fast former Chicago Bear and sprint star, serves as a friend and mentor to these athletes. At 46, Gault can still keep pace with them in practice.

The sprinters release their hands and

Smith, describing his intensive skipping and high-knee drills, nearly 20 runs of 20 meters each. These movements serve as the foundation for world-class performances. If a sprinter is dedicated, in a few years he or she may begin to master them and unlock the secrets of speed. You can't rush this journey. Perhaps more than any other element in the Smith method, these exercises are the indispensable first stage if you want to be fast. Along with the essential body position and movement, the drills teach the art of shifting smoothly, or as Smith puts it, anticipating the "perfect clutch moment."

After the drills, the sprinters will run nine 100-meter turnarounds: striding for 100 meters, turning around and striding again. *(continued on page 115)*





"I'm looking for a straight shooter."

COWBOY UP

WHETHER IT'S IN A MANHATTAN BOARDROOM
OR A BULL-RIDING ARENA, A SPORTS COAT OVER
JEANS IS A CLASSIC WINNER'S CHOICE

fashion by joseph de acetis photography by antoine verglas
produced by jennifer ryan jones

When most guys were taking driver's ed courses, Guilherme Marchi was joining the Professional Bull Riders circuit. Now a seasoned veteran at 26, this Brazilian-born phenom has been a top earner on the PBR tour for the past three years. And when he's not busting them, Marchi is cooking them, thanks to his new Rodeo Grill Marchi in Dallas.

Marchi's jacket (\$625) is by HASPEL. His button-front shirt (\$54) is by PENDLETON. His PBR jeans (\$40) are by WRANGLER. His pocket square (\$85) is by SEAWARD & STEARN OF LONDON.

In 2005 a bull broke some of J.B. Mauney's ribs, lacerated his liver and bruised his spleen and one of his kidneys. But he came back in 2006 and won the rookie of the year award. Two years later his career earnings are approaching a million bucks.



Mauney's jacket (\$3,995) and shirt (\$425) are by ISAIA. His PBR jeans (\$40) are by WRANGLER, and his pocket square (\$45) is by SEAWARD & STEARN OF LONDON.

TALKING BULL

CAN'T TELL A MULEY FROM A BUCKLE BUNNY? BRUSH UP ON YOUR BULL-RIDING LINGO

BUCKLE BUNNY

a bull-rider groupie, what the cowboys mount after they ride the bull

BULLFIGHTER

one of a team of three men in the arena charged with protecting downed riders, swords and satin capes are not involved

CHUTE

the gated steel box where a bull ride originates; when the rider is ready he nods his head, signaling the gate man to open the chute

COVER

to score by remaining on the bull for the full eight seconds

GOLD BUCKLE

a custom-made belt buckle presented annually to the Professional Bull Riders world champion as the sport's ultimate symbol of achievement; valued at more than \$10,000, it's not a subtle fashion choice

HONEST BULL

a bull that moves and bucks the same way every time

KISS THE BULL

to have one's face meet the back of a bull's head when riding

MULEY

a hornless bull, so called because the lack of horns emphasizes its mule-like ears

RANK

adj. hard to ride, mean

SEE DAYLIGHT

to rise sufficiently high when riding that a space can be seen between the rider and the bull

SHORT GO

the final or championship round of an event featuring the 15 top scorers from the preliminary rounds

STICKY

adj. having the ability to ride a bull seated for eight seconds

TRY

courage or gumption, e.g., "That J.B. sure has some try"

UNION BULL

a bull that works hard until the sound of the eight-second whistle, then quits



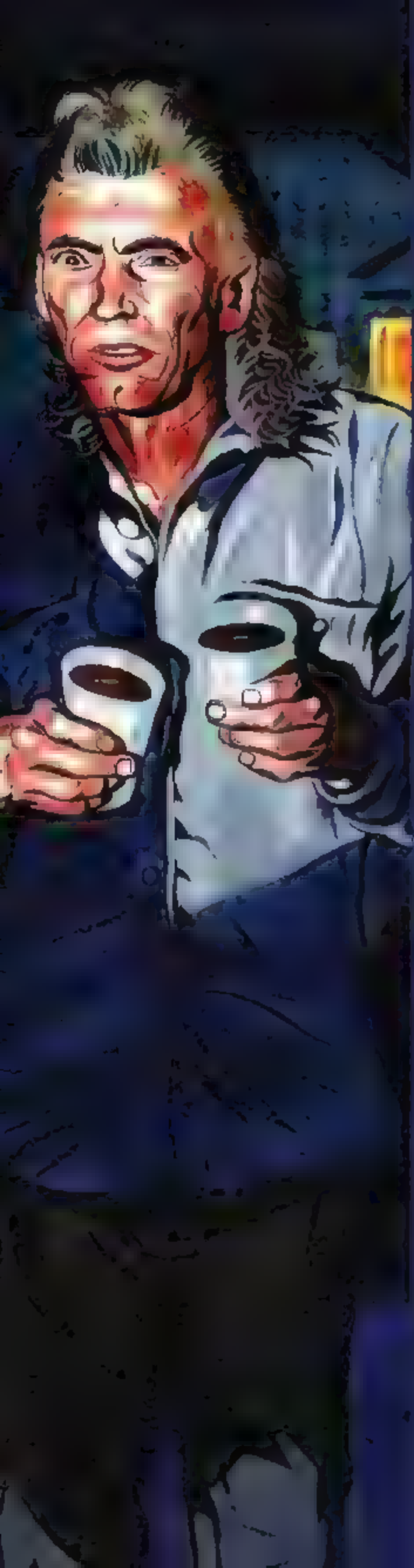
GUILHERME MARCHI



J.B. MAUNEY

—Conor Hogan





JIMMY'S ON THE RUN. ANITA'S LOST IT ALL
AND GAMBOL? HE NEEDS A GUN.
FIND OUT WHO DIES AND WHO SURVIVES
IN THE LATEST HEART-STOPPING INSTALLMENT
OF NOIR NOVEL

NOBODY MOVE PART TWO

Jimmy Luntz woke at the Log Inn Motel and spent 20 minutes sitting upright in his bed, smoking a Camel and staring at the woman asleep beside him. Just watching her breathe. Very gently he lifted the covers. She was dark-skinned all the way down. "Oh, that's right," he said, "you're an Indian." The woman didn't stir.

He carried his shaving kit into the bathroom. Before he emptied his bladder he fished the woman's cell phone out of the toilet and set it on top of the tank. Anita. She hadn't told him her last name.

He took his time shaving, grooming, getting good. He couldn't remember the last time he'd awakened beside an unfamiliar woman. As for one this good-looking—never.

He came out naked and found her wide awake, sitting on the bed's edge. Also naked. Holding a revolver in one hand.

With the other hand she held up a credit card. "What's this?"

"Wow," he said, "you tell me."

"What is it?"

"It looks like American Express," he said. "Wow."

"You said your name was Franklin."

"Well, it's not."

"It's Ernest Gambol."

"It's not that, either."

"Then what is your name, if you don't mind my asking, since we recently fucked, and all."

BY DENIS JOHNSON

ILLUSTRATION BY JEFFREY SMITH



SHE FLASHED A SMILE THAT WOULD HAVE BLOWN THE DOORS OFF JESUS CHRIST.

"Jimmy Luntz."

"Who's Ernest Gambol?"

"Gambol is a great big asshole."

"As big an asshole as you?"

"Bigger. Just my opinion."

"In my opinion, the asshole is the one who steals the wallet."

"The thing about a gun," Luntz said, "is it can just go off."

"I'm not pointing it at you."

"I'm talking about this other gun."

"What other gun?"

"The one I shot Gambol with."

She closed her knees together and dropped Gambol's American Express and took hold of the blanket and pulled it over her crotch. "Now it's pointing at you."

"You don't have to tell me. That's all I can look at, is that gun."

"That's what I thought yesterday. I saw you at the Feather River, remember? I thought, Hey, that guy has a gun. Then—sploosh. No more gun."

"I saw you, too."

She aimed her weapon at him a long time without speaking. She stood up. Luntz stepped backward until his shoulders collided with the wall.

With her purse in one hand and her gun in the other she headed for the can and shut the door behind her. The lock clicked. Luntz heard the shower start. He let the air out of his lungs.

He lit up and smoked half a Camel, inhaling smoke with every breath.

With the cigarette clamped in his lips he went on his hands and knees and pulled Gambol's white duffel bag from under the bed and opened it. He found his last clean set of socks and underwear. He didn't touch Gambol's shotgun.

He got on his socks and shorts and opened his door and tossed the last burning inch of his cigarette into

the parking lot and observed a county squad car pulling up to the motel's office. A green Caprice, mid-'90s.

Luntz sat on the bed and wrapped himself in his own arms and closed his eyes and sat there shaking his head.

As soon as the knocking came he started for the door, but three feet short of it he stopped. He cleared his throat and said, "Who is it?"

"Sheriff's deputy."

"Two seconds."

Luntz put his hand on the doorknob and bowed his head and waited for a thought that didn't arrive. Four more knocks. He opened the door and said, "Good morning!" to a young guy in uniform.

"Good morning. Mr. Franklin, right? How are you?"

"Me?" Luntz said. "Better and better."

"That's good. Do you know anything about a Cadillac parked over there at the airstrip?"

"No. A Cadillac?"

"There's a Cadillac Brougham parked over there, and Mr. Nabilah tells me you checked in without a car."

"Me? Yeah. No. I mean, that's right. Who's Mr. Nabilah?"

"The manager. He thought it might be your Caddy over there."

"Right. Oh. Yeah."

"And it looks like blood on the left rear tire, lotta blood. Did you maybe hit a dog?"

"No. It's not my car. I don't have a car."

"There's a hole in the left rear quarter panel. Looks like a bullet hole."

"For goodness sake," Luntz said.

"Can I see some ID?"

"ID? Sure. Gee. Where's my pants?"

At that moment Anita came out of the bathroom wrapped in a towel, her black hair slicked back, and flashed a smile that would have blown the doors off Jesus Christ. "Deputy Rabbit!"

"That's me," the deputy said, and then—"Oh. Mrs...."

"Right, it's still Mrs. Desilvera," she said. "For six more months."

"Oh, right," the deputy said, "that's your Camaro out there. I mean, it looked like it, I mean—yeah. That's your car." He turned to look at her car, which was parked sideways across three spaces behind him.

"All mine. Is there a problem?"

"No problem. I was just checking about this Caddy out there at the airstrip. If nobody claims it, I'll have to get it towed."

"Tow it to the moon," Luntz said. "It ain't my car."

"He's with me," Anita said.

"Okay, that clears things up a little. Thanks."

"Glad to help," Anita said. "Can I get dressed?"

"That's fine," the deputy said.

"Are you going to watch?"

"Oh!" he said and laughed.

"All righty. Have a nice day, folks."

Luntz said, "You too," and shut the door in his face and sat down on the bed.

Anita dropped her towel and stepped into her skirt. Luntz stared at her breasts.

She got her bra fastened. "That was Deputy Rabbit."

"Maybe his first name is Jack, huh?"

"Deputy Rabbit conducted my firearms training class."

"You actually have a carry permit or something?"

"I did. But it's revoked." She found her blouse on the floor. "Deputy Rabbit was talking about your Caddy."

"It's not my Caddy."

"It was your Caddy when I saw you throw that gun in the Feather River."

"I just borrowed it."

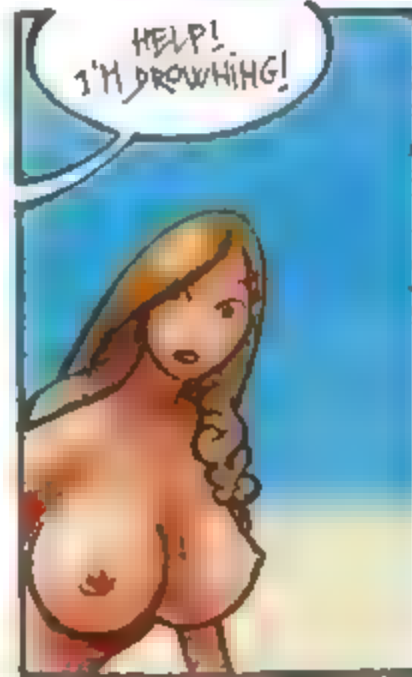
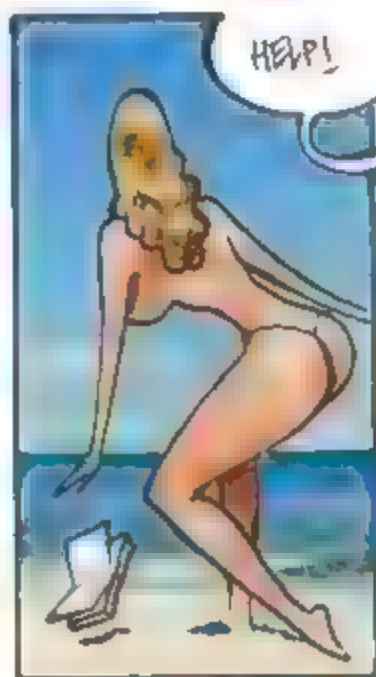
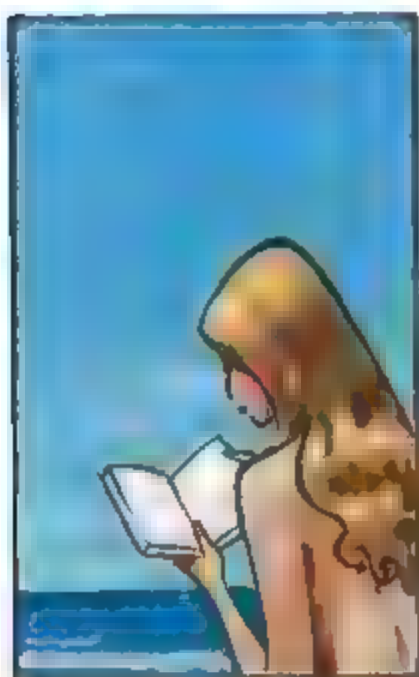
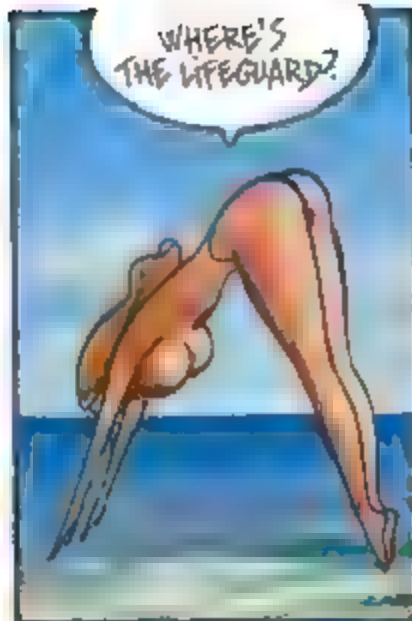
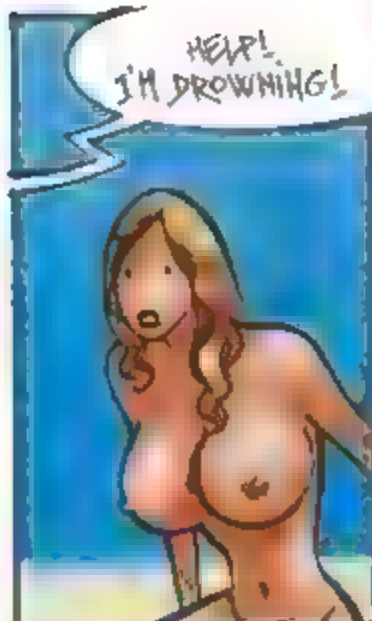
"The gun? Or the car?"

"Both."

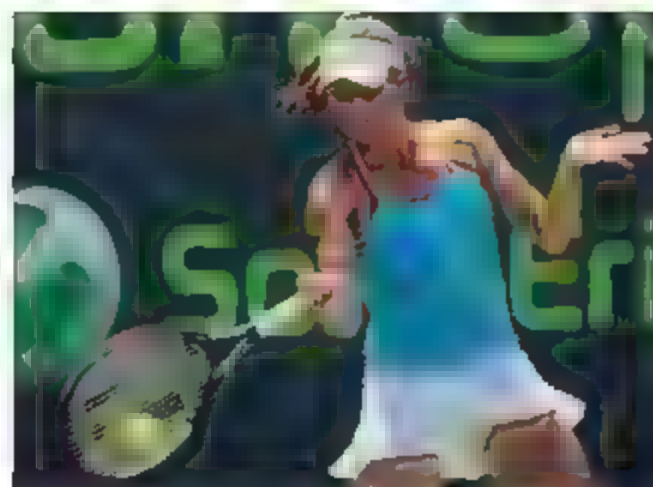
"What did you say your name was?"

(continued on page 125)

Missing?



JUAN IVAREZ • JORGE G



LOVE, ASHLEY

Tennis champ Ashley Harkleroad is smashing

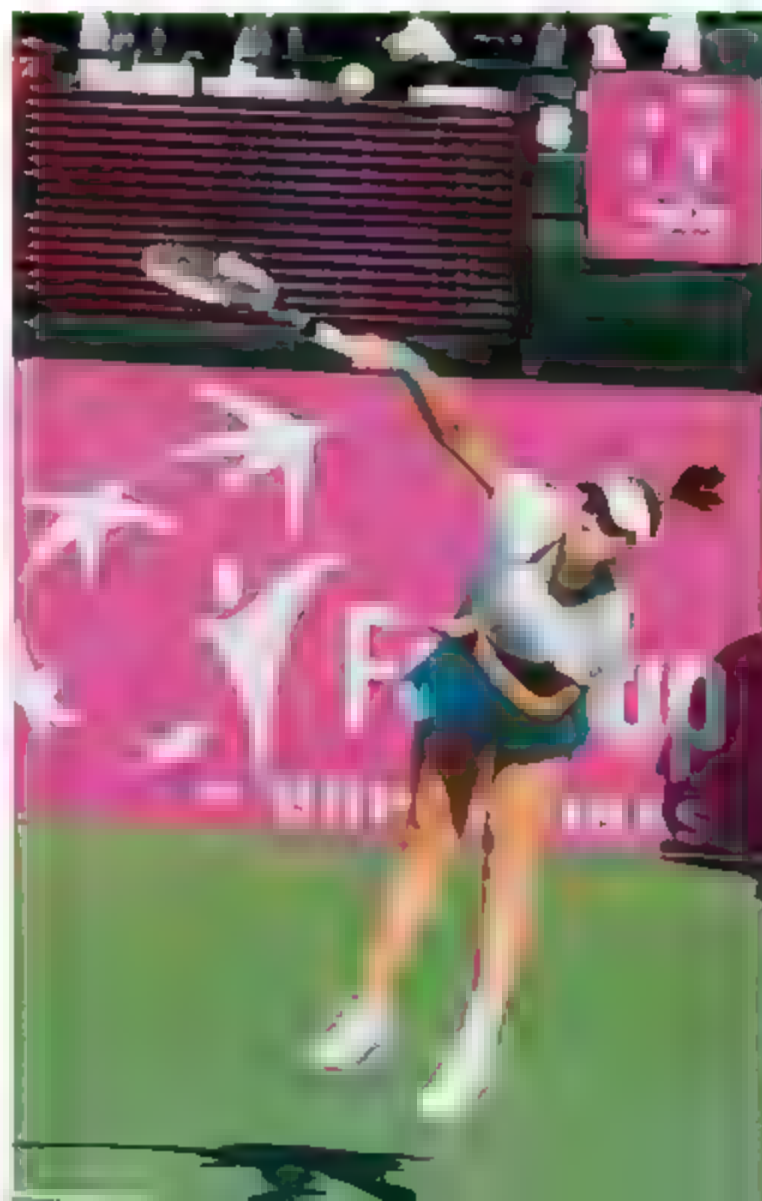
By David Hochman

The news out of the French Open in May wasn't all bad for Ashley Harkleroad. Although America's fourth-ranked female player was eliminated by Serena Williams, she still dominated the news when the story leaked that she had become the first professional tennis player to pose for *PLAYBOY*.

The blonde, blue-eyed Ashley is five-foot-five, petite and possessed of a sweetness acquired while growing up in small-town Georgia. "I'm just a normal girl," she says with a gentle shrug and the slightest of drawls. Wearing stretchy workout gear, she sips an energy drink at the juice bar of her fitness club near her house on the beach in Malibu. "Other girls on the tour have arms like tree trunks. But I'm just me."

To which we say "Advantage Harkleroad." Ever since Ashley showed up at the 2001 U.S. Open at the age of 16, with a long ponytail and a midriff-baring two-piece Nike outfit, the media have likened her to an American Anna Kournikova. But Ashley, now 23, is her own woman. "People put expectations on me because of how I look," she says, "but you can't think about what people say. You just have to do your thing."

And that's working just fine. Earlier this year Ashley swept two key matches against Germany at the Fed Cup, then beat a top-15 competitor to close in on her goal of reaching the top 25 in the world (at press time she ranked 61st). "People took interest in Ashley at first because she's so good-looking and dresses sharp, and they called her a..." (text concluded on page 137)















See more of Ashley at cyberplayboy.com



SELMA BLAIR

(continued from page 91)

thought of it as an old woman's name, so I demanded that everyone call me Blair. In high school, when people found out my name was Selma, they'd call me things like Smell mia or Salmonella. That stuff basically came from friends, and I never really had any enemies, so I just kind of smiled through it. I still don't like my name. It does not fall prettily off the tongue. In fact, it's hideous. My middle name is James, and I like to be called that.

Q 7

PLAYBOY: What sort of kid were you?

BLAIR: Creative, artistic, always drawing and writing. Going to school, I dressed differently every day so I couldn't be categorized. Like, one day I'd dress like an equestrian—very strange. My mom gave me a necklace when I was six, on one side was a smiley face, and on the other was a frowning face. She'd have me flip over the necklace to suit my mood. She introduced me to her friends as her little manic-depressive child. My home life came out of a movie by Wes Anderson—too stylized to be believed.

Q 8

PLAYBOY: Speaking of Anderson, is he on the list of directors you would love to work with?

BLAIR: A long time ago I dated Jason Schwartzman, who is in *Rushmore*, so I've met Wes, but I don't think he was taken with me. I could definitely see being in one of his stories, and I would love to be. I've prayed to work with Roman Polanski. I wish I could've been in *Bitter Moon*, exploring that world of heartbreak with him. Whenever I'm in Paris I see him in restaurants, but I've never met him. I keep meaning to write him a letter, but I'd just come off like a stalker.

Q 9

PLAYBOY: Did you always want to become an actress?

BLAIR: I started at a great small private school in Michigan, Kalamazoo College, where I had a photography scholarship and was introduced to theater. I transferred to the University of Michigan, where I majored in photography. When I moved to New York, I didn't know whether I'd pursue photography or acting, but I would lock myself in the darkroom for 12 hours at a time. It turned out it was harder to make money as a photographer than as an actress.

Q 10

PLAYBOY: Describe some of your photographs.

BLAIR: I didn't have many models I was comfortable asking to pose for me, so I did a lot of self-portraits. But I didn't want them to look as if they were of me, so I made myself up like Magritte's mother, who drowned herself and was supposedly found with her nightdress wrapped around her head. I took a bunch of self-portraits in that state and some very macabre, victim-y ones in which I'd torn off my clothes, found a ditch at the side of the road and jumped in.

Q 11

PLAYBOY: Is it true you lost out on an early acting job on *Dawson's Creek* that put another actress on the map?

BLAIR: I had tested for the Joey role, and it came down to me, Katie Holmes and one other girl. Holmes got it fair and square. She hadn't done anything before that. I remember seeing her walk into the room and thinking, She is just the tallest girl. There's no way they'll give it to her. She won't even fit on camera, she's so tall. Then I ate my words. She was adorable.

Q 12

PLAYBOY: In the first *Hellboy* movie, your pyrokinetic character torches a lot of cool stuff. Flirts with Hellboy and looks hot. Do you get to do more in *Hellboy II: The Golden Army*?

BLAIR: In the first movie, Liz is very much a wounded little girl coming to grips with whether Hellboy is her boyfriend or not. In the new movie she's more sure of her powers. She lives with Hellboy, they have lovers' spats, and there's a lot of humor in that because of our superpowers—he's so strong, and I'm so fiery. Evil creatures come from the underworld to destroy Earth, and without spoiling it, I'm right along with Hellboy. I'm a part of the force and more of a superhero in this one.

Q 13

PLAYBOY: Did you have any trouble unleashing your inner butt kicker?

BLAIR: The one note Guillermo del Toro—the director and writer—always had for me was "No, you're strong. You're strong!" I found it difficult to play a really strong woman once I had established her as a kind of child in the first movie. I hope it works. I'm in it a lot.

Q 14

PLAYBOY: Have you ever had an erotic thought or two about Hellboy?

BLAIR: Oh my God, yes. [laughs] I have such a huge crush on Hellboy. I find him very sexy. I find his body appealing. He has a great physique, and his personality and humor are really laid-back. It's funny because I'm such good friends with Ron Perlman, and when he was in costume, I was always flirtatious, hanging onto Hellboy, touching him, holding and kissing him. When he'd take off his makeup at the end of the day, I'd be like, "Oh hey, old buddy, put your costume back on."

Q 15

PLAYBOY: A guy could get scorched being around your *Hellboy* character. Who should stay clear of you in real life?

BLAIR: People who abuse animals or children or who throw cigarettes out in the canyons and paparazzi who take pictures of me at six in the morning when my face is still bloated from sleeping. Please, it takes a village to get me ready. Can't you wait until the village has put my face on?

Q 16

PLAYBOY: The four years since *Hellboy* opened have been especially eventful for you, including a marriage and subsequent divorce from

Ahmet Zappa, a relationship with actor and model Matthew Felker and a reported rehab stay. Do you think those life experiences informed your performance in *Hellboy II*?

BLAIR: I was having a much harder time when we shot the first one, going through a terrible breakup and feeling like crying every day. It was appropriate that I played Liz as wounded. In this new one Liz is more confident and, of course, not only older but ready to be in a relationship. I learned a lot in my marriage, and I remain friends with Ahmet. I'm so glad I married him, and I'm so glad I divorced him, because he turned out to be such a wonderful friend after the marriage. I didn't know someone could remain so loving after a certain type of loving was gone. I'll probably be single for a very long time, because I don't want to get into something lightly. I can't repeat former patterns. I admit I know nothing. It's scary.

Q 17

PLAYBOY: Do you want to say anything about the 2007 press reports that said you spent a month at the Promises rehab facility in Malibu?

BLAIR: It was written about, but it's something I'm not prepared to talk about.

Q 18

PLAYBOY: How big of a hummer is it to have to see a famous ex in a magazine or on TV, dating someone new?

BLAIR: It's very difficult. I pray I don't run into my ex-boyfriends around town. I wish they'd move back to where they came from in the Midwest or someplace. I don't want to see them on billboards or in magazines. It's heartbreaking. I'm very sensitive, and it's hard for me.

Q 19

PLAYBOY: What is the most absurd thing the tabloid press has printed about you lately?

BLAIR: That Kevin Federline and I were dating. People were asking me about it. [laughs] Oh yeah, it's going really well. We're really happy. I'm pregnant. Seriously, that was strange. We had exchanged phone numbers at some place, but we didn't even see each other on the night in question. Weird.

Q 20

PLAYBOY: You're about to co-star with Molly Shannon on an American TV version of *Kath & Kim*, the hit Australian comedy series about a dysfunctional mother-daughter relationship.

BLAIR: I have long hair for the show, and I feel like a Mormon. Talk about Goth-looking. Thank God I play a brat who says whatever she wants, isn't the friendliest girl, is juvenile and dresses like she's 18—in unicorn hoodies, tight jeans and Uggs boots. It's a real comedy, very funny, but a little daunting because everyone's so up in arms that we're going to ruin an Australian show. That's fine. I'm best as the underdog.

Read the 21st question at playboy.com/21q





Richard B. Wilson

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COOL

(continued from page 69)

Never a snob, however, he wanted only for his striving Good Life acolytes to loosen up, chill down and groove out but with a style all their own—as long as a dash of panache was attached (and in the end they also somehow assuredly got the girl). Thus would later come, in exemplary fashion, the instructive brass plate affixed to his Chicago Playboy Mansion ballroom door—that notorious portal to highballing nonpareil—which exhorted, in Latin, *SI NON OSCILLAS NON TENENTUR* (that is, “If you don’t swing, don’t ring—like I needed to tell you). The message, for always, would be one of bona fide projected self-reflection. As early editorial deputy Ray Russell once put it, “Remember that we were young men very much like our readers—educated but not overeducated, hip, fond of money and material things like snazzy cars, plush apartments and dressing well. We liked that. We did not manufacture a phony image. It was sincere. We spoke the same language.”

The pluperfect playboy, according to 1956 promotional copy, was a facile specimen who “must see life not as a vale of tears—a man who—without acquiring the stigma of voluptuary or dilettante—can live life to the hilt.” Basically, then, an upbeat, unaffected customer whose jazzy shrug was the envy of all other shoulders. The flip side of that platter was, as Hef later conjured it, a drone’s blind compromise: “settling for job security, conformity, togetherness, an ovinity and slow death.”

Dig for a moment: if you will, a very selective chiaroscuro of the Playboy Cool. In the beginning, please note, there is only existential timelessness. This, at least, seems ephemerally conveyed via the premiere issue, which carries no date (as in month or year) and thus instills no unwanted hurry. (In truth, a cautious Big Daddy was uncertain there’d be a second issue, but still—how Zen!) Fittingly, an ice bucket (stainless steel, coated in unborn calfskin, \$58) is the very first product recommended to readers. Volume One, Number One. First food feature: *Pleasures of the Oyster* (wink, nudge). From the fifth issue, an enthusiast in Ames, Iowa writes to the editors, “Well, Dad, if you keep up the fine job, you’ll have us all flippin’.” It really is the most to say the least: “Keep cool.” Early *Party Joke*.

A cool friend informs us that the best way to cut off a cat’s tail is to repossess his Jaguar. Per those quiet discussions of Picasso, Picasso provides the illustration for a January 1957 Ray Bradbury short story about a guy obsessed with Picasso. Within a decade the large Picasso masterwork *Femme nue endormie* (“Girl sleeping nude”) adorns the Chicago Mansion fireplace. (*Chicago Daily News*, “It hangs just about 10 feet from the newest Hefner toy—a huge Tworokov painting that rises at the touch of a button to reveal two color TV sets.”) First two personality-profile subjects, in issues seven and nine: renegade individualists Orson Welles and Frank Lloyd Wright. Per mixing up cocktails, the August 1954 feature *By Jumper! A Tall Gem Drink Will*

Make Her Cool and Cooperative. Artist LeRoy Neiman (a Hef discovery and forever urbane contributor who also fathered the *Party Jokes* page Femlin nymphet) creates an iconic image of a lean, lank, sharp-suited natty cat for the painless primer *The Well-Dressed Playboy* (January 1955), with tips for the reader that will prove “as dependable as his favorite bartender.” (Same Neiman natty cat becomes ubiquitous symbol in the magazine and in a promotion that states with casual aloofness, “I’m not worried about tomorrow. I’m living now.”) Memorable, less-than-vague guidance from *Formal Forecast: The Return to Black* (January 1958): “Now we said black. Not midnight blue, not maroon, not burnt ochre. Just black. Black looks and feels right.” (Black would later also look and feel right as the sleek shade with which Hef cooled his jet—i.e., the famous cavernous ebony-painted private DC-9 aircraft christened *The Big Bunny*, i.e., “my flying apartment,” luxuriously festooned with seat-heated bed, shower, dance floor, wide-screen movie projection, et al.) In-house ads debut in 1956, for ceramic black-and-white Ratbat Head cuff links (“No jewelry collection is complete without a pair—send \$4”), which will telegraph an unspoken bond among like-minded prowling sybarites. Ian Fleming’s James Bond, agent supreme of Dearly Cool, who first made the scene the very year *PLAYBOY* did, becomes a regularly serialized character in the magazine starting in March 1960, begetting a near-symbiotic brand identification. “Bond’s material world,” writes essayist Hume, “is a heightened version of that recommended to the *PLAYBOY* reader.” Thus it would follow that in future 007 films, for all posterity, Bond is seen suavely paging through the magazine and brandishing membership in the London Playboy Club and Casino—where it so happened Frank Sinatra, a.k.a. the eminent Leader of the Cool (and of the emblematic Rat Pack), had also shot part of his own 1967 spy yarn, *The Naked Runner*, and where, upon surveying the black-tied swells at gaming tables, bestowed the ever-discerning ring-ding benediction “Nice joint you got here.”

And so it would go (practically ad infinitum), especially with the nice joints and the ring-a-ding—a twain that dependably met and danced to a pure-jazz soundtrack unending. Proper cribs, in *PLAYBOY* ethos, hopped merely from wall to wall, tempo 1BD. “A far-out musician friend” went one *After Hours* item in April 1978, “informed us that he had just moved into new digs. ‘You are invited, man,’ said the cat, ‘to attend my houserooling party tomorrow night.’” Jazz, to be sure, would never have a better friend or a bigger house (to blow the lid off of) than *PLAYBOY*, which on arrival made itself the premier mecca for all professional hipsters (aspirants and audiophiles also real welcome). Indeed, the first genuine celebrity letter to the editor, published in May 1955, came from no less an approving Cool jazz master than Dave “Take Five” Brubeck, who wrote a think piece of his own that ran three issues later. The annual epic Jazz Poll to elect the fantasy Playboy All Star Jazz Band (which, for an annual stretch,

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resulted in a four-sided *Playboy Jazz All Stars Album* sampler) got up and swinging in October 1956 ("dig this ballot and vote"); for years onward all the famous nominees gratefully ate up the attention. Sammy Davis Jr. (whose pet Saint Bernard was named Playboy) started buying campaign ads in the magazine. Further, in 1959, there came quite likely the most splendid gas ever staged in jivedom history, nearly insane in its celestial proportion and spread across one August weekend wherein 70,000 revelers at the Chicago Stadium beheld the first Playboy Jazz Festival. The performing roster, indulgent past the brink of musical decadence: Satchmo and Ella, Duke and Basie, Dizzy and Cannonball, Bud and Pee Wee and Teagarden and Kenton and Brubeck and Rollins and Hawkins and Nina and Dakota—and, well, count up every great jazzbo you know of, then double the number and keep going—and, but of course, there was the stone-sour crown prince of Cool, as in Miles Davis, who hated fests but did not miss this one (and who three years thence became the inaugural subject of what would be the magazine's weightiest institution—think of it, perchance, as the *Birth of the Cool Playboy Interview*—thereby conferring his frosted majesty on all such mega-inquisitions to come). Anyway, in

fest aftermath, *Variety* duly reported, "Yes, cats, there is a Santa Claus, and his name is Hugh Hefner."

And as for him, well, that particular *annus coolibilis* of 1959 would rank stratospherically on his swelling tab of Very Good Years, during which other keen benchmarks also compounded. Seismically, he purchased a Chicago property that redefined the word *mansion*, knocking the stuffy out of it by eventually transforming his new 70-room austere monolith into a Playhouse Valhalla trinket rigged for state-of-the-art hedonism—i.e., rotating round bed, sliding walls, secret passageways, bowling alley, fire-pole plunge to the underwater bar (which was under the pool, which was under the ballroom floor) with peekaboo trapdoors, automated stereophonic everything everywhere, et cetera plus Bunny dorms. This original urban pleasure dome was in part inspired by the similarly ingenious—if strikingly modernist—seven-page dream design for *Playboy's Weekend Hideaway*, a cantilevered waterfront retreat unveiled in the April issue (now admirably cited, vis-à-vis the *Birth of the Cool* catalog, as comparable to the revered *Art & Architecture* portfolio of Case Study Houses from the period). Three years prior, the sumptuous two-part prequel, *Playboy's Penthouse Apartment*—"a high, handsome haven preplanned and furnished for the bachelor

in town"—had not only laid a giddy blueprint for seriously upward mobility (sky and tech- and design-wise) but stood as the most wildly popular feature the magazine had yet published (all Playmates included). Naturally, then, on October 24, 1959, when there debuted the first Hefner hosted syndicated television series, a transcendently hip weekly talk-variety faux cocktail party, it could only be called *Playboy's Penthouse*. Hey, you go with what works.)

From the show's indelible opening sequence—white Mercedes 300SL (owned and piloted by Hef) night cruising Lake Shore Drive, camera-eyed elevator ride to imaginary 30th-floor living-room bacchanal in progress—melodically swathed in Cy Coleman's sexy, tanking, made-to-order "Playboy's Theme" and then roning forth across 90 minutes of gbb airtime, the cool medium had without doubt seen nothing quite this Cool. Here racially mixed guest performers tippled and intermingled (albeit verboten on TV back then) and casually burst into spontaneous song or dance or sit-down comedy, thus amid the swanky-smoky-boozy (actual hard stuff) swirl of formally draped Playmates and playboys at play. As Hef explains to Lenny Bruce on that opening installment (Ella Fitzgerald and Nat "King" Cole would also "drop by"), he aimed to "make the thing sort of a sophisticated weekly get-together of the people that we dig and the people who dig us... and just have ourselves a kind of late-night ball." That same night he coaxed maestro Coleman to noodle out his most recently completed tune, "The Best Is Yet to Come," which Sinatra would later make such a hit that its title would become the epitaph carved on his tombstone. (Ring-a-ding-dong, alas.) Which kind of demonstrates yet another sublime way the eternal history of Cool can be traced, if just enough, back to one editor-soothsayer-cat who bet his taste in furniture on the craziest dream



Not that the Cool nor our blissful reach toward it, has ever departed the mortal swankosphere—it just evolves and transmogrifies and retranslates and also, for kicks, doesn't mind occasionally glancing at the rearview mirror. To that end, a half-century beyond, I happened to be watching our preeminent pajama-clad dreamer on his latest TV show (what they call *reality* programming) on which he shares the ball with three gorgeous blondes who adore him madly. Anyway, in this episode he wanders down the street to a house he keeps for visiting out-of-town Playmates, where a baby shower is under way, and suddenly he seems caught in reverie upon noticing the broad red womb-shaped perch whereon the young mother-to-be nestles. And he softly says, "I always get very sentimental when I see somebody sitting in that chair." And the women ask why, and he replies, "Because it's a duplicate of the chair I was sitting in, holding the very first issue of the magazine, in that photo."

And the Cool, you can't help but realize has never gotten too far from him especially Dig?



PERFECT SPRINT

(continued from page 94)

"That's the warm-up," Smith says with a cold smile, alluding to the five quick 200-meter runs that will follow—the actual workout. "God bless you."

They toe the line, eight lanes, two deep. Greene commands the center lane, and with an imperial glance from side to side he takes the first group out. The drill is called the A skip, a powerful skip with a high-kick action in which the center of the foot strikes the track with force. Greene's calves reach out for the track and then hammer down. The runners march in military precision, 16 feet striking the drum of the track.

The Greene movement does not come easily. Smith pounces on Leroy Dixon, the wide-eyed 23-year-old all-American fresh from the University of South Carolina. Dixon has amazing bounce, but he's like a Slinky—all over the place. "You think you're getting it by reaching out for it," says Smith. "You're not. You're not taking advantage of this movement. The key is the dorsiflexed foot." Smith pulls Dixon aside and shows him how to flex his foot, toes pulled toward the shin. Smith brings his foot down hard under him like a prancing horse's, then back up underneath his buttocks. "You hit the ground like a springboard," he says.

The flexed foot maximizes force and creates a wheel-like forward locomotion. These are not strides so much as revolutions. The secret, Smith says, is the movement, the feet cycling in a circle.

Arms back, Leroy!" barks Smith. "Feel your movement." The young sprinter glances at his coach, and Smith burrows in. "Pay attention to what you're doing. Put your chin down."

The drill continues, and suddenly Smith shakes his head angrily. A couple of sprinters have eased up a stride short. He points to the red cones marking 20 meters.

"See this cone right here? It's where you stop. You don't stop here," he says, pointing a couple of feet short. Smith knows of one athlete who liked to stop his drills one stride short. "He wound up being number four all the time," he explains. "Nobody's fault but his."

If there's one American sprinter likely to take gold in Beijing, it's Jeremy Warner. A Baylor University track prodigy, the 24-year-old runs the 400 meters and won the gold in Athens in 2004. For all the attention he'll receive in the weeks leading up to the Olympics, the training regimen of a long sprinter is often a lonely exercise.

On a cloudy morning in Waco, Texas, Warner's silver-haired coach, Clyde Hart, eases his new Cadillac through the main gate into a cemetery with Warner in the front seat. A cemetery—not your ordinary place to train. The road is narrow, and Hart winds through the tombstones and oaks, the leaves gold and red, pulling to a stop when the road straightens. Warner, the reigning Olympic champion in the 400 meters, climbs out, tall and all legs. He wears blue sweats and a yellow Adidas shirt.

After a few gentle stretches Warner leans into the car to help his coach check the odometer. An easy workout on this early season day: four five- to six-minute runs at a comfortable pace with two minutes' rest in between. Warner slips off his sweats, his legs long, lean and sinewy. Head shaven, face angular, he is built to sprint longer than any other man. He clicks his watch and takes off through the cemetery as we roll behind in the car.

Warner ruled the 400 meters the past few seasons, running it in the mid-to-high-43-second range, earning several million in endorsements and prize money. He's knocking on Michael Johnson's record of 43.18 seconds, and track weenies drool on the Internet that he could be the first white man to crack 10 seconds in the 100 (he's the first white American man to win an Olympic medal in the sprints since Michael Larrabee won the 400 in 1904).

Warner's first run is leisurely, and I join him on his second trot. He starts bounding down the road. Inches away, I can feel his float, the uncanny way he seems to fall into each stride. The first 200 meters or so I hang by his side, needing three strides for his two, then he dances ahead and disappears among the tombstones.

Hart's Cadillac provides my locomotion for the next interval, and the coach takes me through his charge's solitary regimen. Nothing fancy. Hart is old enough to have seen and rejected just about every wacky new idea and gadget that is supposed to make you fast. "They used to pull people behind cars. Now they have them put on parachutes," says the coach, shaking his head. "It's busywork. You gotta run."

Simple strength, Hart believes, has helped Warner hold his speed longer in his races. Once a week in the fall Warner runs 1,000 meters on grass twice, with several minutes' rest in between. Each week he chips 50 meters off, cutting it to 950, 900, etc. Another day he'll train almost like a miler, focusing on aerobic conditioning and running 16 200-meter runs in 36 seconds with two minutes' rest in between. But Warner doesn't want to be a miler, so each week he runs one fewer 200 but ends a second faster—15 runs in 35 seconds, then 14 in 34. "It's kind of like Pavlov's dog," Hart says. "He's going to run one less, but he's going to run faster. When the mind knows it has one less, it will do that."

By summer Warner sprints five 200s in 25 seconds. Another day he pops a few 350-meter intervals. "Go 40 seconds at a hard run, and the by-product will be lactate—that's what makes the butt and legs heavy," Hart explains. "That's the essence of training. As the body learns to buffer this lactate, that's conditioning."

Warner takes off on his last morning run, a cooldown, and I join him. Hart let Warner run a few national 200-meter races last year, and when I ask what he likes about the shorter race, he brightens.

It shows the speed a lot of people think I don't have. I know I can go under 20 flat," he says confidently. "The more I run it, the faster my time will be. And the good thing is it will get my 400 time down."

Warner chats as if he were sitting at a Texas diner, ordering pie. My breathing grows heavy, and my questions come in labored chunks. "Track guys on the Internet are saying Jeremy maybe could break 10 seconds in the 100 meters."

He looks me in the eye, his voice light and excited. "It might be possible," he says. "I've never run a 100 before."

What did you do in the 200 last year?

"20.19," he says proudly.

I nod, impressed.

"So I know I can run a good 200."

Warner is on the cusp of being fast enough to seriously contest international 200-meter races, something few white men have ever done. "Maybe one day Coach will let me run the 100, just to get a time in," Warner says, clearly excited at the prospect. "It could be a small meet."

We round a large tombstone, my breath coming in gulps. "What's the hardest part of the 400 for you?"

"Just staying mentally prepared for it. Just knowing I've got people on my back the whole time."

A couple of more deep breaths and I ask the question anyone who has ever tried to sprint a lap would ask. "When you hit that wall in the 400, where do you feel it?"

Jeremy Warner is not even breathing hard. "Honestly," he says, "I don't feel it anymore."

Warner hopes to break the record in the 400—43.18 seconds—which is owned by his friend and agent Michael Johnson. For nearly a decade Johnson dominated the 200 and 400, winning his first gold medal in a world championship in 1991 and his last in the 2000 Olympics. When we meet near his home in Marin County, California, Johnson doesn't hesitate when asked who his favorite sprinter is.

"Jesse Owens," he says. "He was a very efficient runner. He had incredible turnover, a great center of gravity. He was on top of his body." On the eve of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics Owens's widow told Johnson in a letter that his straight-up running style recalled her late husband's. But analysts at the time thought different. "When I first came up," Johnson recalls, "the television commentators would say, 'He has great talent. As soon as he starts to run the traditional way, he'll break a world record.'"

Johnson had been told he ran "funny" since he was a boy and started dusting kids in Dallas. College recruiters told him they'd have to work on his technique. Johnson instead went with Clyde Hart, who didn't see much to change. But he understands why so many questioned his style. The Jesse Owens mode—the upright, rigid sprinter—had faded from the popular lexicon. "They did studies, though, and it turned out to be more efficient," Johnson says. Quicker strides were the answer. It is a conclusion seconded by Ralph Mann, a renowned biomechanics expert who uses films of Johnson to demonstrate superior long-sprint technique for USA Track & Field, the sport's governing body in America. Johnson, like

Owens, proved small gears turning fast can get you there quicker than big slow gears. "It's the down force," Johnson says. "The harder you hit, the harder your foot comes down, the faster and quicker you're propelled forward."

The litmus test of Johnson's desire, mechanics and training was the 1996 Atlanta Games. No man had ever won the 200- and 400-meter races in the same Olympics. "I tried to point out all the pitfalls," says Hart. Johnson would need to run eight races in seven days. "I told him, 'You've never gotten an individual gold in the Olympics. You're the best 400 runner in the world. It's less chancy than the 200.'"

Johnson convinced his coach it was worth the risk. Pietro Mennea's world record of 19.72 in the 200 meters—set at high altitude—had stood unchallenged for almost 17 years, much like Bob Beamon's miraculous near-30-foot long jump. The stage was set before the Games, when Johnson won the U.S. Olympic trial in 19.66 seconds, breaking Mennea's mark. For the Atlanta Olympics, Nike designed extra-light spikes for Johnson, the soles fashioned of carbon fiber, the feathery body woven with golden thread. He won the 400 by nearly a second. Three nights later he lined up for the 200 final.

"I got a better start than normal, and then I stumbled a bit," Johnson recalls. "When you get a good start, gravity pulls

you down. You've got to pump your arms to keep your balance." He didn't panic. "If you start to make too many changes, you're out of the race," he says. The first half of the 200 is a curve, centrifugal forces chewing up hundredths of a second. But Johnson came through the 100 in 10.12. His quick shorter strides helped. "I just was good at curves, always have been," he says. He made a smooth transition into the straightaway, not pressing too hard.

The dreamy euphoria long-distance runners speak of? "People always want to know what it's like," Johnson shrugs. "In the sprints, you don't have time to enjoy the scenery. You're executing a strategy. He felt the phases of the race like a Formula 1 driver shifting through the turns. "Everything is clicking. It all feels effortless." He watched the clock as he neared the last 20 meters. "It was going to 17 seconds, then 18. I could see the tenths. With 10 meters left Johnson felt his hamstring starting to go. A jolt, and then his leg wobbled. But he kept moving. "It's the Olympics. If I pull it, I pull it."

The crowd erupted. The time a stunning 19.32. Johnson had his historic double, cracking his own world record by a whopping third of a second. More amazing still, with a rolling start Johnson clocked 9.20 in his second 100 meters (faster than the world-record 100 meters). Until that day the 100-meter champion

had always been considered the all-out fastest. But Johnson's last 100 of his record 200 meters was run at an average of 24.3 mph, or more than 35 and a half feet a second. The pundits started calling him the World's Fastest Man.

Coach Smith weaves commitment into the discipline of speed. The Smith sprinters are also quintessentially L.A., donning sleek shirts, jewelry and fashionable sweats, toting a boom box for some post-workout hip-hop. They're generally photo shoot-ready. The squad used to practice at UCLA's fabled track (Smith was a top UCLA coach for 17 years) but had to move because too many fans were showing up and interfering. Not that Smith's athletes don't enjoy the attention and the spice of controversy. They've been blasted for their flamboyance and for seeming to embrace their teammates more than they do the U.S. national team.

The coach's genius is to approach the 100 as a long race. He breaks it into seven phases, starting with reaction time—that instinctive response to the starter's pistol. More critical is phase two, block clearance, the initial ballistic push—body low, chin tucked, arms swinging up to the head and all the way back. You set up the race with the drive phase, your torso and head gradually rising like a plane on the runway, accelerating for the first 30 meters. Then comes the pivotal gear shift, phase four, the transition to overdrive. Too early and it's like a jet taking off before it builds up sufficient thrust. At 30 to 35 meters elite sprinters kick into phase five, accelerating till they hit maximum velocity around 55 to 65 meters. Maintenance is what Smith terms the next 20 to 25 meters, extending the maximum velocity. What's left? The final 15 to 20 meters, where, surprisingly, sprinters actually decelerate. Smith laughs. "I call that phase 'Oh shit!'"

Moving smoothly through the subtle transitions in under 10 seconds is extraordinarily difficult. "I tend to jump out there and want to get it over and rush it and get tight," Leonard Scott confesses. "I get in a hurry. I get overanxious. I'm trying to get to the finish line, and you're not supposed to do that. You're supposed to let the finish line come to you." Strangely, Scott's coach says it's not purely a question of speed. "Leonard has the first 60 meters down," explains Smith. "We're working on the last 40. His challenge is getting fit enough to run the 100 meters."

How can a runner tire in eight seconds? "Great sprinters generate huge amounts of rotary velocity," says biomechanics expert Ralph Mann. Elite sprinters, says Mann, take five steps every second. "Try that standing still," he says, "let alone at 12 meters a second."

What happens inside the body? The gun fires and the sprinter drives his legs in a furious push, arms pumping. He burns fuel like a rocket engine. The explosive muscle contractions devour the small stores of energy in the cells, known



"Penny for your thoughts."

trained alongside 1992 Olympic 400-meter champion Quincy Watts from one to three P.M. at the UCLA track, where Smith coached. "It was very hard for me. He had me do the A skips, B skips, high knees. Everything is body position—how you strike the ground, how your arms swing. Your hands are your feet, your forearms your shins, your upper arms your thighs. I had to learn how to walk again. We would lift weights and then go out to the track. I would be very sore. The first time I threw up I heard them saying, 'We got one!'"

The arduous training left Greene literally too exhausted to step off the track, Smith often tossing a sweatshirt over him on the infield at three P.M. as the breeze kicked up. "I would be so tired, I would just lie there and sleep," says Greene. "Coach would start working out the college guys, and I would be just waking up when they'd be finishing at five."

Greene's Nike contract was a bare-bones \$20,000, and he was so broke he slept on a friend's couch for several months. Even worse, he didn't seem to be getting any faster. "I was running meets, not even in the top three," he says. "I was worried. Man, is this going to happen? I gotta be a realist. What if I couldn't make it?" Greene started checking the classifieds for a job. "I went to the Prefontaine meet, ran 10.19 and took fifth. I was discouraged. Then I went to the 200. I was mad that I was in lane eight. I wasn't putting that much effort into it, and I looked over and saw I was in last place. Something clicked in me. I got the body position, ran everybody down and took third."

The nationals were next. "Just before the race, Coach told me, 'You're about to run fast. Don't get too excited. Look at the time, take a deep breath and walk. Off like you knew you could do it.' I ran 9.96 easy! I jogged in, thinking, Oh my God, what happened? I took my deep breath. Fireworks were going off inside. I was thinking, I know how to do it. I can do it anytime I want now!"

Greene did it again in the finals, winning in 9.9. He did it later that summer in Athens at the world championships, defeating the defending Olympic champion and world-record holder, Donovan Bailey. Twice more he would win 100-meter world championships, once taking both the 100 and 200, a feat never before achieved in men's competition. He set world records in the 100 and 60 meters, the only man ever to hold both records simultaneously, and took gold in the 100 meters and 4x100 relay at the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

Barely more than a year later Greene discovered his mortality. He was side-swiped while flying down a freeway near Los Angeles on a motorcycle. He suffered a potentially career-ending injury: a broken fibula. Greene guarded the accident like a state secret, leaving the scene without even filing a police report. It was early 2002. Doctors kept him off his leg for a month, and then he began arduous pool workouts. Not until late April did he even step onto a track. Smith didn't dare put him in a meet before the nationals in late June. Miraculously, Greene won that year's U.S. championships in 9.88, but in rushing back he incurred nagging hamstring and quadri-

ceps pulls and struggled to return to form. The tabloids in Britain dubbed him Slo-Mo Stull, in Athens, Greene nearly won back-to-back Olympic golds in the 100. Looking back, he believes a tactical error may have cost him the second victory. He eased up in the semifinal and took third. Relegated to an outside lane in the final, he says he "couldn't feel the inside of the race." Still only two hundredths of a second separated his bronze from gold.

Leonard Scott slides his shoulders under a bar holding twice his weight. He squares his hips. The time is a little before eight A.M., the place Gold's Gym in Venice, California. The air is thick with grunts and the sound of clanging weights. Looking down from the walls are images of a bulging Arnold Schwarzenegger, who trained here, and other monstrous Mr. Olympias.

"Straight from your feet!" commands Smith. "Now all the way up. Straight from the hips. Push the bar! Push it straight!"

For Scott, the man who would be champion, it's another day at the office. His body shaking under the load, he rushes the next one. "You're trying to get out of it," smiles

Greene guarded the accident like a state secret, leaving the scene without even filing a police report. Doctors kept him off his leg for a month.

Smith wickedly. "Enjoy it!" One more brutal squat. "Let's go, Leonard!" Smith barks. The sprinter drives the bar, legs wobbling.

Scott sags out from under it. "My legs are gone," he wearily confesses. "We've been in the weight room every day this week. We've been running some crazy workouts: 400 meters, 300, 200, 100." He shakes his head. "You come here in the weight room, squatting all this heavy weight. Then you have to go out and run, legs just dead."

Scott has reason to be tired. He was up this morning at his usual 5:45 to shower, eat his oatmeal and drive the hour and 15 minutes to Gold's. In the two years since the 26-year-old quit football and dedicated himself to track, his body and fitness have been transformed. A nutritionist counsels Smith's sprinters, and Scott has the enthusiasm of the converted. He often dines by six P.M. and is in bed before 10. He also makes certain to feed his muscles. Within minutes of his last morning sprint, Scott makes himself a protein drink right on the infield. "You have to put something in your body," he says. "You have microtears in your muscles. You have to rebuild those microtears." Lunch is a sandwich and salad, dinner is baked chicken or fish with vegetables. His weight has dropped from 195

pounds to 183. "I'm lighter than I was playing football," he says, "but I'm stronger."

Squats and power cleans are his critical lower-body lifts, but the track is where he really works his legs. "A lot of people are amazed we do weights early in the morning and then get on the track," says Scott. "Our legs are already tired, and we're trying to do a workout." The feeling is "almost like pulling the rubber band back," he says. "The weight feels like a heavy load." Then when the big meets come, says Scott, "Coach takes us out of the weight room. He lets that rubber band go."

Months have passed since I first endured a couple of painful days training with Smith's sprinters. This morning I ask Greene how he's doing, and he shakes his head and smiles ruefully. "I had a little setback. A little minor injury," he says quietly. "My calf." He pauses. "I wish as runners we would, like, tweak something in our arm," he laughs. "Because if we did that, we could still run. It's always something with your calf or your hamstring. You can't run, and then you lose a week and a half or two weeks, and it's hard getting back. I wish I'd be running and then 'Owww, my arm!'"

Greene tells me about the ultrasound, electrical stimulation and massage he has been getting for his ailing calf. Then everyone gathers on the infield for the start of the workout, stretching and jiving and spiking up. Smith makes Lorn Edwards blush as he teases her about her attention-getting chartreuse tights. Watching Scott shed his gray sweats and reveal his massive thighs and muscled torso, I think of how little separates good from great. At the end of 2000 Scott was ranked third in the world. If he holds or raises that ranking, you'll hear his name at the Olympics. If he slips a tenth of a second or sustains an injury, he'll be just another sprinter who didn't make it.

Greene is in the blocks. In a minute ESPN will go live with the first of three heats of the men's 100-meter dash at the 2007 Adidas Track Classic in Carson, California. Greene is cycling through his movement, little bursts that propel him halfway down the track. He walks back easily in his plain, thick gray sweatshirt stained with the sweat from his long warm-up. Veins bulge on his shaved head. Today he is one of several Smith athletes in the 100; they will get 10 seconds or so to prove whether they have it.

Greene's heat approaches, and the stadium announcer introduces the athletes. "Maurice Greene, 2000 gold medalist and 2004 bronze medalist. American record holder in 9.79..." The camera boom sweeps over the sprinters' heads, and a hush falls over the stadium. Greene is last to the line, last to settle into his blocks. The gun fires, and this time it isn't there. Thirty meters in, Greene moves to shift and can't find the gear. He trots the last 20 meters, looking as if he's trying not to pull a muscle, dead last.

I trail Greene as he talks to reporters, signs autographs for kids and then faces a tougher critic than the media, a finely sculpted knockout in heels and capri pants

who appears to be his girlfriend. "I couldn't," he shrugs, shaking his head. "I couldn't get out of the blocks. I can't get my tempo."

Greene heads into the crowd to the top of the stadium with the rest of his teammates who have finished their races or weren't scheduled to run. His crappy race all but forgotten, he enjoys the track meet with his friends.

The sleek, unflappable Torri Edwards is up in the 100. The gun fires, and her start seems unremarkable. The first 10 meters she's no better than fourth. At 30 meters she calmly accelerates. Midway down the track her afterburner kicks in. Her confidence and control are uncanny. Everything they've been doing in practice the past six months, the whole Smith manifesto, she packs it all into this tight 10 seconds. You can feel it while you watch her. She's taking her sweet time, delaying her speed deeper into the race, and just like that she jets into the lead. Olympic gold medalist Veronica Campbell closes hard, but Edwards dips first at the line, so fast she has to skitter

over in front of her competitors to avoid barreling into the photographers.

Her time flashes on the big electronic board: 10.9, the fastest in the world this year for a woman so far, the best of Edwards's lifetime. She leaps joyously around the track. Greene hugs his teammates, jumping up and down, screaming. A performance this impressive means Edwards has a shot at Olympic gold, and Greene is ecstatic, pointing at the spot 35 yards down the track where the race was won, where his teammate and friend ran her perfect sprint.

"Did you see the gear she had right there?" Greene exclaims, eyes wide, turning to his teammates. "I knew it! I knew it!"

Time was not on Greene's side. A nagging calf injury sidelined him for most of the 2007 season, and in early 2008, with another season of grueling workouts on the horizon, Greene announced his retirement, his dream of a third Olympic 100-meter final dashed.

Out of running, he would not remain out of the news. The steroid scandal looms over the upcoming Olympics. On May 29, Trevor Graham, the former North Carolina-based track coach of drug-tainted former champion Marion Jones, was found guilty of one count of lying to federal investigators about his relationship with a steroids dealer. The government's prime witness told *The New York Times* that Maurice Greene paid for banned substances in 2003 and 2004. Greene acknowledged paying for items for members of his training group but said he didn't know what he was paying for. "None of this is new," International Association of Athletics Federations spokesman Nick Davies told the AP. "There is no reason to take action against Maurice." Davies added that the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency had found no evidence against Greene, who has never failed a doping test.

Controversy continued to swirl when a letter, allegedly written by Greene's old training partner Alo Boldon, surfaced on a website, calling coach John Smith "the emperor with no clothes" and insinuating Smith himself has known of performance-enhancing-drug use among his runners. Boldon has yet to make clear whether he wrote the letter. Smith and Greene had no comment.

Torri Edwards's impressive race at the Adidas Track Classic kicked off her best season in several years. She won the 100 meters at the 2007 Prefontaine Classic and at the premier international meets in France, Switzerland and Italy. She earned a number two world ranking heading into the Olympics.

Leonard Scott had double knee surgery to repair loose ligaments and then suffered a hamstring tear running indoors. He was a long shot to make the U.S. Olympic team.

Rookie Leroy Dixon dropped his 100-meter time to 10.07, took two seconds in international meets and anchored the U.S. world championship 4x100 meter relay team in Osaka.

All last season Jeremy Wariner continued his steady dominance, maintaining his number one world ranking in the 400 for the fourth straight year and winning the race at the 2007 world championships in his best time ever, 43.45—just 0.27 seconds behind Michael Johnson's world record. Then Wariner shocked the world of track and field by abruptly firing his longtime coach, Clyde Hart, and turning over his training to the respected but unheralded Baylor associate coach Michael Ford. Initial reports spoke of a contract dispute.

After a fast late-April run at the Penn Relays, Wariner told reporters, "I want to break this record and be the first one to 42 seconds. It could happen at any time in the season."

Wariner won easily again at the Adidas Track Classic this May despite a sore hamstring. While signing autographs and posing for photos, Wariner heard one of his fans repeat the same line about the world record. "43.17, Jeremy. We're looking for it this year."

Don't be surprised if Wariner breaks that record while winning an Olympic gold in Beijing.



"The water feels just fine!"



REDEMPTION

(continued from page 64)

chat in the library, and Hall doesn't seem interested in doing so. He just goes to the rack with the newspapers and pulls out the *Wabash Plain Dealer*. He slowly leafs through the pages. After 15 minutes, he gets up and says, "I'll see you later, Jim."

For his part Keene won't strike up a conversation either. He doesn't want to seem too forward. But after a few of these library sessions, Hall invites him to eat breakfast at his table. Jim had noticed Hall always eats in the same corner, always with the same three prisoners. No one sits anywhere near them.

The next day Jim joins Larry at his table and introduces himself to the others. One is in his 20s, tall and skinny, with a mullet haircut and big bug eyes. He sits erect, and his head swivels like an owl's. Supposedly for no reason he murdered his family and then his next-door neighbors with a chain saw. Another of Hall's friends is in his 30s and has a froglike face. The third is big and fat with a bad case of acne. Keene never learns their crimes.

For most of the meal, only Jim talks. He cracks jokes. He complains about the food. He asks what they like to eat. While the others stare blankly ahead, he can see Hall tune in to him and even brighten when he speaks. *If the other guys talk, it is to ask for the milk with a low, slurred voice. At least I am bringing some life to the party, and I can see it makes Larry happy.*

Jim bears some resemblance to Hall's twin, Gary, who is the more outgoing and popular of the two. This may have been why Hall starts to confide in Keene and tell him more about his background. The twins came as a surprise when their parents were in their 40s. Larry's father, Robert, was a sexton, or grave digger, in Wabash. He bragged he was descended from Miami Indians.

After a few weeks of meals together, Keene feels Hall will invite him back to his cell, where they can talk privately. Maybe he really can get Hall to open up and be home by winter.

Just as Keene thinks things are going well, he's thrown a curveball. One day three white weight-lifter types with slicked-back hair surround him as he walks down a corridor. He has seen them hovering over a stooped, frail old man at a table in another corner of the cafeteria. "The old man wants to talk to you," one of them says.

The old man is Vincent "the Chin" Gigante, who was the leader of the Genovese crime family in New York City. For most of the 1970s he frustrated federal efforts to prosecute him by wandering the streets of Greenwich Village in a robe and slippers. In fact he was a sophisticated boss, overseeing an extensive bookmaking and juice loan operation and using his control of trade unions to shake down construction sites. His dementia act did not save him from conviction, but it did get him placed among truly demented prisoners at Springfield.

Jim gets along fine with Mafia prisoners

His grandmother is Italian, and his grandfather used to be a driver for Al Capone—the sort of pedigree the mobsters loved to hear about.

Gigante's men hustle Jim to where the 70-year-old is waiting. Gigante can tell Keene has some Italian roots, but he doesn't like the other things he sees. "Let me ask you a question," he says, poking a finger at Jim's chest. "What are you hanging around those baby killers for? You want someone to put a knife in your back?"

Over the next few months Gigante enforces his own strict routine on Jim. No more hanging out with baby killers. Jim is expected to have breakfast with Gigante. *Out of the corner of my eye, Keene thinks, I can see Hall look at me like he wonders why I won't eat with him anymore. But I know enough about Mafia guys not to disrespect them. My freedom is staring at me from across the room, and I have to look the other way.*

After breakfast Keene follows the old man into the prison yard and plays bocce on the grass court. Since Jim's allergies exempt him from a day job in the prison factory, Gigante expects him to be his morning companion.

Keene is desperate to find time alone with Hall. Surreptitiously, Keene starts to stalk the serial killer to see if there is a place outside the cafeteria to bump into him. Hall doesn't keep a schedule like other prisoners. Because of his experience as a janitor, he leaves his cell early to work in the boiler room. At night he spends hours in the wood shop. Jim won't be allowed through the door until he spends a full year at Springfield without incident—another nine months. When he passes the shop, he always sees Hall busy at what looks to be the same project: a carved wooden falcon the size of his hand.

His best shot to find time with Hall is after dinner, when prisoners gravitate to the TV rooms. Jim has learned that Hall's favorite program is *America's Most Wanted*. Hall and his friends camp out every Saturday in the tiniest, least desirable TV room a few hours before the show's scheduled time. To break the ice, Jim decides to join them.

Keene's chance to steal the spotlight comes one night when a muscular black gangbanger appears a few minutes into the show and changes the channel. Keene hears Hall mumble under his breath, "That ain't cool," but he and the others remain motionless. Seeing he could be the savior, Jim jumps up and turns the channel back. The black inmate changes the channel again. When Jim jumps up again, the black man points at him and says, "White boy, you better not touch it, or you'll have a problem." Keene turns the show on again. The intruder pulls back to swing, but Jim nails him with four quick punches. As he falls back into the chairs, Jim jumps him, stomping his head and chest.

Keene spends that night in solitary, a windowless cement room with nothing

but a metal bed and toilet. He paces until morning, wondering if he has sabotaged his whole mission. But right after he gets his breakfast tray, he is taken to a hearing before six administrators, including the chief psychiatrist, who nods at him with a smile. The only witnesses to the assault are the serial killers. Each of them backs up Jim's story that the black inmate, who has a history of assaults, barged into the room to change the channel and swung first at Jim when he switched it back.

Jim is now Hall's hero. Although they cannot eat together, they sit in the TV room, chatting after shows or talking a few minutes before lights-out. Coincidentally, one of the first *America's Most Wanted* shows they watch features serial killers, with the mother of one victim pleading to find out where her daughter is buried. Keene sees an opening. When they talk later, he says to Hall, "Why doesn't that guy tell the parents where he buried the daughter? If I was the guy who killed those girls, I'd give them the location."

"You would?" Hall asks.

"Sure," Keene says. "It's not like the guy's ever getting out. The least he can do is give the parents closure and get some redemption for his crime."

Hall seems to ponder the thought for a few moments, then asks if someone like that could ever get redemption. "Oh yeah," Jim tells him, remembering the sermons he heard as a child. "The worst sinner can's find redemption."

Even a cursory look at Hall's early life reveals a number of traits found in other men who commit multiple rape-murders: complications at birth, childhood poverty, an alcoholic father (his drinking forced him into early retirement from the cemetery), an overprotective mother, early contact with the police for arson and vandalism, no normal experience with sexual intercourse and few friends.

But other aspects defy the definitions of FBI profilers. Hall had the slovenly appearance of the impulsive "disorganized" killer, yet when investigators seized his 1984 Dodge van they found the detailed notes of an "organized" offender, reminding himself to "plan and plan" and "check over again." He kept meticulous lists to prepare his van for abductions and to buy materials for cleaning up. He cautioned himself, "No evidence. No forensic residues." Indeed, no biological evidence was ever found.

When he was tracked down by a Vermillion County, Illinois detective for the murder of Jessica Roach, the girl in the cornfield, he provided a statement detailing how she was abducted, raped and strangled. "I am not in control," he told an FBI polygraph examiner. "This was one of those times when I was not in control." But a few weeks later he told a newspaper reporter the statement had been fabricated by his interrogators.

During the session with the FBI examiner Hall also confessed to the murder of Erica Reuter, who disappeared from her college in Marion, Indiana six months

before Roach's murder. Incredibly, Hall had previously confessed to that murder when police found him with an "abduction kit"—rope, knife, ether-based starter fluid—four miles from where Rentler was last seen. Since the Marion police already had their prime suspect in custody, they dismissed Hall as a morbid wannabe and didn't even arrest him. Their wannabe theory became a key argument for Hall's lawyer in the Roach trial. Marion police were even ready to testify in his defense. A month after Beaumont convicted Hall in the Roach case, he organized a search for Rentler's body, using marks found on maps

in Hall's van for directions. His expedition enlisted anthropologists, cadaver-sniffing dogs and FBI aircraft with heat sensors—all to no avail.

But in those first three months they are together in Springfield, Hall won't even tell Jim the nature of his alleged crimes, let alone the locations of his victims' bodies. Like Keene, he pretends to be in Springfield on weapons charges. At least he now feels comfortable inviting Jim into his cell. There, too, Hall's seniority and conduct have earned him special benefits. On one wall he has hung a cardboard cross to show he regularly attends the chaplain's

services. There is a photo of his father and mother and another of his brother.

By December Jim has been in Springfield five months, but it seems longer, and his window of opportunity is closing. As the chief psychiatrist warned him, there's no telling what will touch off a crazed prisoner. A case in point is a tall biker from Iowa who killed several people while high on methamphetamine. He has a lanky, muscular body and spiderweb tattoos around both elbows. Enraged simply because Jim has mentioned his name to another inmate, he corners Keene in his cell and, with a fly in his hand, screams, "Why's my name coming out of your mouth?"

Without room to swing, Jim lets his wrestler's instincts kick in. He dives for the biker's spindly legs, picks him up and flips him down hard on his back, where he pounds him with both fists until the guards drag him away. Keene spends another night pacing the hole. But the biker refuses to speak up in his own defense, and Jim lucks out again.

Jim has to take some risks to get Hall to open up. One night when they are alone in Hall's cell, he asks, "Haven't we been hanging around each other long enough to tell the truth?"

"What do you mean?" Hall replies.

"Come on, Larry," Keene tells him. "I know all about your case."

Hall's eyes grow wide, and he looks away. "What do you mean?" he asks.

"It was in all the Indiana newspapers," Keene answers. "My mom's got a subscription to a newspaper from your area. When I told her your name the other day, she said, 'Your buddy is the one accused of killing those girls.'"

Hall averts his eyes. "I don't know who you're talking about," he says.

After Keene leaves Hall's cell, he spends a restless night wondering if he has moved too quickly. The next morning during breakfast he sees Hall looking at him from across the room. Was he up all night thinking too?

Keene can't wait to find out. When they pass each other on the way out, he slaps Hall on the shoulder and says, "See you later in the library," as though nothing has happened. Hall looks back at him with relief and says, "Yeah, sure." Jim realizes what Hall most fears: that Keene will stop talking to him.

That night, when they are alone in Hall's cell, Jim asks again about the girls, and Hall seems to go into a trance. In a robotic voice he says, "Sometimes I have dreams about bad women, and in those dreams I hurt them."

At first Keene doesn't know what to say. *I can't tell him I hurt women too*, he thinks. *But I can say I was hurt by women, like he was*. Jim mentions one longtime girlfriend who got pregnant while he was behind bars. "I've had bad dreams about her," he says. "Fuck these evil chicks." Then Keene asks, "What about that Jessica Roach?"



"Why, little Billy Bob and Edna-Mae! I had no idea you two young'uns was steppin' out together!"

With the sound of her name, Hall's head turns away. "Why would they just pick you out of the blue and say you did this to that girl for no reason?" Jim asks. "What was the deal? Were you dating her?"

After a long silence Hall says, "It wasn't like they said. It wasn't like Beaumont said. Me and her were talking. She was friendly. She was being nice. She was one of the first who was nice to me."

It takes several nights before Keene hears Hall's version. He doesn't want Jim to think he pulled the girls into the van but he doesn't deny forcing himself on them when they refused his advances. With Roach, he claims, the trouble started when he tried to kiss her in his van. Hall says she started to go crazy. She was hitting and punching him, and he began choking her to make her stop. "The next thing I knew," says Hall, "I was lying next to her and I had her strapped down. My clothes were off, and her clothes were off. I think I blacked out and we had sex together."

When Roach began to cry for her mother, he forced her from the van with her hands bound and marched her through the woods. Hall shows Jim with his fingers how he interlocked two belts and used them to bind her neck to a tree. From the other side, he twisted the ends with a stick as you would a tourniquet, so he wouldn't have to see her face when she died.

Keene has waited months to hear this, but in the dim light of Hall's cell he feels no exhilaration. By telling Larry he understands how he could be hurt by women, he almost

feels guilty of murder himself. What if Jessica Roach really had smiled at Hall? She was innocent and, as a result, so vulnerable to real evil. While everything Hall tells Jim brings him closer to freedom, it is also too much to bear.

Eventually Hall has more to say about Tricia Reiter. She was also pretty, he says, with beautiful hair. She too seemed to like him but then started hitting him after he tried to kiss her. He tells Keene he blacked out and when he woke up he was looking down from above. At these times he was not in control. Someone else was doing the bad things. Below, he could see himself choking Reiter.

"I realized I had done it again," he tells Jim. In a panic he drove the 20 miles from

Marion to Wabash and parked the van in his parents' driveway, leaving Reiter bound inside. He went to his room and paced back and forth until he could clear his mind. Later that night, he says, he drove into a wilderness area, where he killed and buried her.

Jim still needs a more precise location for Tricia Reiter's body. Somehow he has to find a way to ask without making Hall suspicious. One night, when Hall doesn't appear back in his cell, Keene looks for him in the TV room and the wood shop. From the doorway he sees Hall standing by his workbench. No guard is around, so Jim enters unchallenged. As he moves closer to Hall, over his shoulder he sees

"I better leave," he says, "before that guard comes back."

Keene practically runs through the halls to the phone room. If Hall carved the falcons to watch over the dead, then the spots on the map are where he buried his victims. First he calls Agent Balkus and gets her answering machine. He warns her to intercept the map before it leaves the prison. Next he calls Big Jim. "I want to give you some peace of mind," he says. "I really think I've figured this out and I'd be leaving any day now."

When Jim returns to his cell, he sees Hall is still away. Hall gets back minutes before lockdown. Now Keene can't contain himself. He walks across the hall and pokes his head inside Larry's cell. "I looks like I'm going home," he says.

Hall pulls back as if he has been slapped.

"What are you saying?" Hall asks. "I thought your sentence was 40 years."

That is enough to mess with Hall, but Keene has more. Just thinking about his release—from Springfield, from the whole prison system—makes him giddy. "Larry," he says, "after what you told me, I realize you belong here the rest of your life. I don't see how you can live with yourself."

Hall backs up deeper into his cell, his eyes wider than ever. As Jim walks across the hall, he hears him whine. "Beaumont sent you. Beaumont. Beaumont!"

Keene sleeps well that night. The next morning, he wakes to the sound of keys rattling. As he turns to the light, guard after guard piles into his cell. A short, squat woman in a pantsuit hovers

over his bed. She points a finger at him and shouts. "Who are you, and what are you doing here?"

Jim still has a blanket wrapped around him. "What do you mean?" he asks. "I'm James Keene."

"I want to know who you really are," she says. "Why did you hassle my patient with all these questions about his cases?"

Her patient? Keene realizes she is Hall's shrink. When he peers through the phalanx of guards, he sees Larry standing behind them. She continues to bark questions. "Did the prosecutor send you? Did you see the file? Did you see my report?"

Two guards grab Jim by each arm and drag him out of bed. "You're going down into the hole until you decide to tell us 123



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not just one falcon but several, all nearly identical. Hall places one after another in different spots marked in circles on a road map. As soon as Hall hears Jim behind him, he dives forward to cover up the map. "Jim, what are you doing here?" he asks. "You know you're not supposed to be here." As he folds up the map, Hall says he has just finished a project to send to his brother in Wabash.

Keene grabs one of the falcons and turns it over in his hand. Although unpainted, it is intricately finished. Hall reaches over to pet the top of its head, his fingers trembling. "These are totems, Jim," he says. "They watch over the dead." His eyes are wide, and he looks ready to cry. Jim hands the falcon back.

the truth," she says. They put him in cuffs and shackles and push him outside in his bare feet with no more than his boxer shorts and T shirt. Still groggy from sleep, Jim stumbles forward like a man in a dream.

He is back in the hole again, but he tells himself it is just a misunderstanding. As soon as the FBI gets his message, it will set him free. But the day wears on, and no one comes except the guard with his tray and a change of clothes. No one comes the next day, either. Jim whistles for a guard and waits until he is close enough to see his eyes in the eye slot. "Officer, now listen to me," he whispers. "I'm not just a regular criminal. I'm here working undercover with the FBI, and if you can just get me to the chief psychiatrist—"

"Shut up," the guard says. "You're as crazy as the rest of them." The guard never looks through the eye slot again. Jim is scared. He knows he looks as crazy

as he sounds. This is exactly what Big Jim had feared when Keene told him about Beaumont's plan—that somehow his son would end up lost in the system. Jim paces for hours, cursing himself for blurting out what he said to Hall.

He did not keep up his regular meetings with the chief psychiatrist. Now his life depends on getting word to him. Yet he can't have the guards think he is a nutcase, either. Over the next few days he tries to build a rapport with a night guard, acting as normal as possible. He thanks him for his food and chats about the weather for the few moments he is by the door. Finally, without telling him why, he asks if he can see the chief psychiatrist. The next day, when the guard starts his shift, he tells Jim the psychiatrist is on vacation for another week.

It is all Keene can do to keep from screaming. The next seven days seem to take an eternity to crawl by, but finally the

slot at the bottom of the door slides open, and he hears the psychiatrist whispering, "Jim, what's going on? The guards tell me you claim to be with the FBI. You're not supposed to say you're with the FBI."

"And you're not supposed to go on vacation," Keene says. "Get hold of that FBI lady," he says, raising his voice, "or I'll tell everyone in this prison you work with the FBI."

Within hours the guards rap on the door and tell Keene to put his hands out for cuffs and then attach the shackles. As he hops after them, he sees Butkus at the end of the corridor, surrounded by men in suits. "Take those off of him," she orders. As the guards remove his cuffs and shackles, she says, "Jim, I'm sorry." For some reason his message never got through to her.

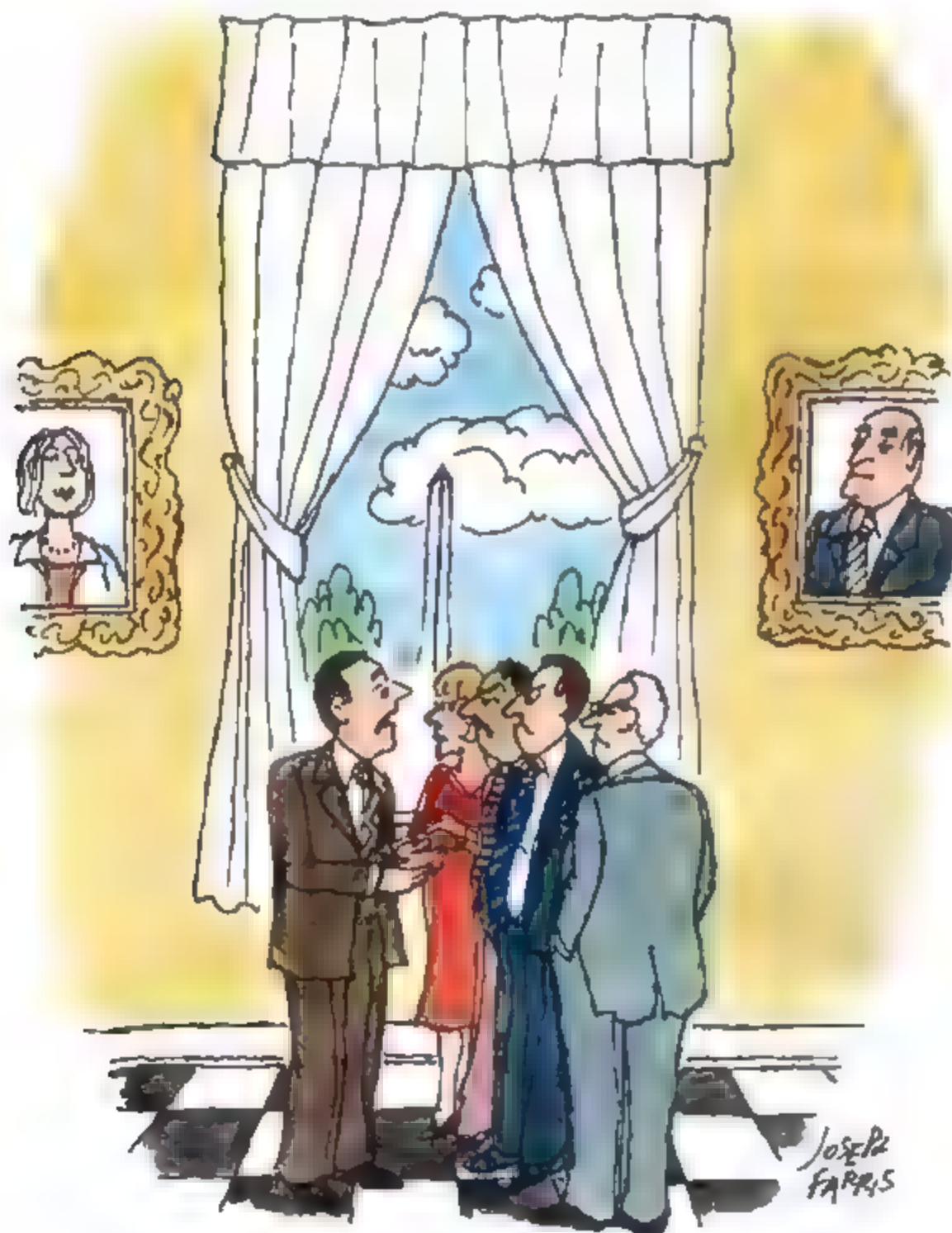
The suits surround Keene and Butkus. Together they march through the main corridor of Springfield as the inmates head in the other direction for lunch. Those who know Keene stand with their mouths open as his procession passes by. Keene and company head right out of the building and toward another corporate jet on the runway.

Once again on the plane, his handlers treat him like a brother. "They had this whole turkey meal waiting for me—probably the best food I had in months—and I ate it like a wild animal," says Jim. "Janice sat next to me and kept apologizing, but I was raving at her—scratching at my beard, food flying from my mouth. That was really bullshit. I told her 'I can't believe you left me there that long.'" But even as he rages, Jim is on his way to freedom.

To this day, no one will tell Keene what happened to the fakers and the map. Although he did not locate Reiter's body, as Beaumont required, he had gotten Hall's confession to her killing. Keene passed a battery of polygraph tests to prove it. Beaumont honored his agreement, and in February 1999 the judge granted Keene, after a year and a half behind bars, a full and unconditional release.

Ironically, if Beaumont's gambit did not succeed in providing closure to one family—the Reiters—it did for the Keenes. After his release Jim got the chance to spend another five years with his father before Big Jim died of a heart attack.

After the encounter with Keene, something snapped in Hall. He was transferred to another prison medical facility and is no longer competent to stand trial. Meanwhile, back home in Wabash, with both parents dead, Hall's twin, Gary, has taken to telling acquaintances his brother is a serial killer. He admits he watched his father retrieve a map from Larry's van that had little circles, each with a 00 inside them—what he took to mean "dead body." He counted 22 circles before his father burned it.



"I swear. It won't happen again. Without thinking, I broke ranks and voted my conscience!"



NOBODY MOVE

(continued from page 100)

"Jimmy?"
"Can I borrow the Cadillac, Jimmy?"
"What's wrong with that Camaro of yours?"
"Too many people know."
"Like Deputy Rabbit, you mean."
"Can I have the keys?"
"The door's unlocked," he said. "I put the keys under the floor mat. But I wouldn't advise driving around in that thing."
"Is it stolen?"
"Not legally, I guess. Gambol doesn't deal with the police."
"Gambol? I thought you shot him."
"He didn't die."
"Is he running around looking for it?"
"Probably not. Not yet. If he is, he's running around on one leg."
Luntz stared while she sat on the bed and stuck her toes into the legs of her panty hose and stood up straight and hiked her skirt and wiggled her underwear all the way on. She dropped the hem and smoothed her skirt. One at a time she kicked her black pumps into position on the floor and worked her feet into them. She got on her coat and opened the door.
"Wait a minute," Luntz said. "I want to talk to you. I mean, about last night."
"What was your name again?"
"Jimmy Luntz. I had a good time last night."
"It was kind of a fluke, Jimmy."
"I get that. Yeah. But maybe we could have coffee or something."
Leaving the front door ajar, she went into the john and came back and handed him her cell phone. "Hang on to this phone. If it still works, maybe I'll call you."
She gave him a little salute and walked out, and he sat there hokling her phone in his hand for 10 minutes.
After 10 minutes he set the cell phone aside, clapped his hands together twice and stood up. He got dressed and got his gear together. He had no jacket other than his white tuxedo. He put it on and pocketed the cell phone. He picked up Gambol's duffel by the handle and looked around for anything he might have forgotten. A knock came at the door.
He opened it quickly. It wasn't Anita.
Two very clean-cut men stood side by side in the doorway, one of them holding up a badge. "We're with the Federal Bureau of Investigation."
Luntz said, "Wow."
The man put his badge away and told Luntz both their names, but Luntz didn't hear.
"Wow," he said. "For a second I thought you were Jehovah Witness people."
"Can I ask your name, sir?"
"Franklin. But listen—I'm about to hop on a bus. I'm late."
"Where's Mrs. Desilvera, Mr. Franklin?"
"Mrs. who?"
"The lady staying here with you."
"Oh. I didn't get her last name. Just her first."
"Are you two pretty good friends?"
"They're on a first name basis," the other one said.
"I just met her last night."

"Yes. We're aware of that."
The other one said, "What's in your bag—two million dollars?"
"What?"
"Didn't she tell you she's sitting on a pile of other people's money?"
"We barely got introduced."
"We understand that," the nicer one said. "Did she say where she was going?"
"No, sir. Destination unknown."
"Let me tell you what this is about, Mr. Franklin. In just a few days your friend will plead guilty to embezzling two point three million dollars." He waited for a reaction and seemed satisfied with Luntz's speechlessness.
"You didn't know about it?" the other one said.
"No, sir. No. Embezzlement—that's a federal thing, huh?"
"She'll plead guilty to state charges. But until the money goes back where it belongs, we're very interested in her. Federal charges aren't out of the question. Can you show us some identification?"
Luntz dug out his driver's license and handed it over.
"I thought you said your name was Franklin."
"Yeah—but that's when I didn't know who you were."
"I told you who we were."
"Oh," Luntz said, "that's correct. I guess I got confused. I thought you guys were Jehovah Witnesses."
"Really?"
"Look, I have to catch a bus south in fifteen minutes. I mean, now it's ten minutes."
"When will you be seeing Mrs. Desilvera again?"
"Never. I got the impression it was, you know—a fluke."
"A fluke?"
"That's the description I'm giving it."
"What's in the bag? That's not her bag, is it?"
"It's mine. It's my luggage, is all."
"I bet you wish it was her luggage."
"So she still has the money, huh?"
"Was she carrying anything, Mr. Luntz?"
"You mean like a satchel with a big old dollar sign on it?"
Neither of them laughed.
"Just a purse," Luntz said. "About yab big."
"You mind if we look around the room?"
"Help yourself. I'm all checked out. And I'm really late, so—yeah. Okay if I get moving."
"That'll be fine. We'll make a note of your name, Mr. Luntz."
"Okay. I sure hope I make that bus."
They stepped aside for him, and the nicer one said, "Good luck."
"I was born lucky."
Luntz set out at a good pace without a backward glance. He had no idea where he was going.
In his pocket, the cell phone started ringing.

Gambol closed his eyes. He felt his head nodding forward and rode a Ferris wheel down into violent cartoons.

He shivered, but he didn't feel cold. When he shivered, the pain filled his right leg.

"I want another shot."
Not for two more hours," the woman said. "This isn't an opium den."
He opened his eyes. He wore a frilly blue nylon robe. Probably the woman's.
"Where's my clothes?"
"How many times are you going to ask me that?"
"Fuck you."
Your stuff went out with the rest of the bloody trash."
Gambol's head drooped, and he looked down into Jimmy Luntz's face.

The landscape had that blond central-valley look. Some pine trees. Oaks. Orchards. Farmland. Sunny and still. They drove south in the Caddy past Oroville, looking for a shopping mall. The speed signs said 65. Luntz stayed legal. He kept his window cracked to suck his cigarette smoke away from Anita's face.

Luntz said, "Dude who worked in a casino in Vegas told me about this hippie. This hippie comes in out of the desert night, creeps into the casino all scraggly in his huarache sandals and tie-dye shirt and Hindu balloon pants, and he goes to the roulette table and reaches into this little pouch tied to his belt and comes up with one U.S. quarter. Lays the quarter on black. Little ball comes down on twenty-two black. He lets it ride, doubles again, switches to red, doubles his dollar, takes his dollar to the blackjack and wins ten in a row, doubling every time. Ten in a row. True story. One thousand and twelve dollars. He pulls his chips and heads for the craps and starts betting with the shooter, double whatever the shooter bets. Inside of two hours the house is clocking his action and he's comped with free meals and he's drunk on free booze, and he's still at the craps, with a crowd around him, betting a couple hundred a throw. By three A.M. he's stacked up over three grand off an initial investment of twenty-five cents. And suddenly, in four or five big bets, all gone—he busts out. Stands there thinking a minute. Folks around him watching. He stands there... Everybody's shouting, 'One more quarter! One more quarter!' Old hippie shakes his head. Staggers back out into the desert after one hell of a night in a Vegas casino. A night they're still talking about. Total cost was twenty-five cents. A night he'll never forget."

For a person who doesn't drink coffee," Anita said, "you sure run your mouth."
"It keeps me from thinking about things."
"Like what?"
"Like who you are and what the fuck you want."

Cigarette smoke in his nostrils woke Gambol, and he coughed, and the woman said, "Sorry," waving it away.
"Lots of folks are quitting these days."
"What century are you in, guy? I'm the last smoker on earth."

"How long have I been here?"

"You don't remember yesterday?"

"When was yesterday?"

"You were walking and talking."

"Walking?"

"And swearing. In a real creative style. I poked my head into that culvert, and you hopped right up and walked right to my car. Then," she said, "I couldn't get you out of the car. I had to do the whole thing in the backseat. Debrided the wound and all the rest. The backseat of a Chevy Lumina is not the place for that."

Cumbol closed his eyes. "I feel like I weigh ten tons."

"You lost a lot of blood. A lot. I scored one liter of plasma. Nothing else but glucose and water."

"Feels like he shot me through the bone."

"He missed the bone. Or you'd be in the ER right now getting your leg saved and probably talking to a detective."

"I don't talk to detectives."

"And he missed the big artery, or you'd be dead."

At the Time Out Lounge in the Oroville Mall they sat in the rearmost booth, and Jimmy only stared at her, never sipping once from his Coke. She took a long swallow of vodka and Seven and said, "Oh well. Was I on TV again?"

"How did you steal two point three million bucks?"

"Didn't the TV tell you? You run a bond election for a new high school, you float the loan, turn on the computers, transfer it here and there—zip, all yours."

"That's greedy."

"Then the money gets missed right away, and the list of suspects is extremely short. Then somebody gets arrested."

"Well," he said.

"Well what?"

"I guess you were greedy enough to take it but not mean enough to frame an asshole. Excuse my language," he added, "but where I come from that's what they call the guy who gets sacrificed—the asshole."

She laughed without feeling amused.

"There was definitely an asshole," she said.

"If you've got it slashed, you're doing it right, wandering around acting broke. That's doing it right. But if you've got it, why don't you just disappear."

"For one thing, I'm due in court to enter a plea and take a deal. Probation and life-long restitution. If I miss that date, the judge'll void the deal and max me out. That's six years at least."

"Kind of a long time to wait to spend your two million."

"Have you lost count already? Two point three."

"What's a point or three among friends?"

"I haven't got any friends. And I haven't got the money. I just know who has it and how to get it."

No comment from Mr. Jimmy.

"Doesn't that interest you?"

"You're interesting every way there is."

This Jimmy was your basic bus-station jayelina but a nice enough guy. He insisted on giving her two Ben Franklin hundreds

before they left the lounge. "You're with me now."

"That's not established."

"By 'now' I just mean now—right this second. That gets you at least a couple hundred."

He led her into JCPenney, where he stacked generic looking stems on one of his arms and went into the dressing room wearing his shiny black pants and white tuxedo and came out in chinos and a Pendleton.

"Where's your fancy threads?"

"On the floor in there. I shed those babies like a sun tan."

"You're fast."

"These days, life is fast."

She picked out a JCPenney pantsuit, a JCPenney blouse, a JCPenney skirt and the cheapest underwear they had. While Jimmy stood around waiting for her she sat in the dressing room momentarily naked with these latest humiliations at her feet and rage in her heart. JCPenney.

She changed into the pantsuit, gray pin-stripe, and made sure she had her shoulders back and her smile on before she swept aside the curtain. "Does it fit?"

He stared, and then he went for his Camels and put one between his lips, realized where he was, dropped the cigarette into his shopping bag. "It fits."

"You're sweet," she said, and she sort of meant it. But not as a compliment. "You're homeless, right?"

"I have a home. I'm just not going back there. Is all."

"So right in that shopping bag is everything you own."

"Everything I need."

"And your white canvas bag—what's in that one?"

"Everything else I need."

I know what's in it. A sawed-off shotgun."

He seemed completely unsurprised. "It's not a sawed-off. It's a pistol grip. And it isn't mine."

"I peeked in the bag while you were in the shower."

"You zipped it up real nice," he said. "Good for you."

Jimmy Luntz drove the Caddy north. He watched the dial and kept under the limit. Again they passed through the blond country. Some vineyards here and there, lots of vineyards. Either vineyards or orchards with very small trees. He asked her if those were vineyards.

"What do you care? Are you a wino?" Anita drank from an extra-large Sprite in a go cup, doctoring it with vodka.

Orchards. A roadside stand selling Asian pears spelled ASIAIN PEARS. Then higher country, the road winding. They lost the jazz station. He found another, just geezer rock. Tight curves, tall pines and geezer rock. "Is that the leather Rver?"

By way of answer, she took a swig and coughed.

"Hell of a lot of trees," he said.

"That's why they call it the forest. I hope we're not going camping."

"We are if I can't find this place before dark."



"Take it from me, honey, the best way to a man's heart is through his fly."

"Look, Jimmy—who is this guy?"
 "I knew him in Alhambra."
 "Is that a prison?"
 "It's a city a few hundred miles from here
 in your state, California."
 She pushed the button and her window
 came down and the wind thudded in the
 car as she pitched her empty and listened
 for the small musical sound of the bottle
 shattering behind them.
 "You're nice," he said, "when you're
 sober."
 "Have you ever seen me sober?"
 "I think I did for about a minute."
 She lay her head back on the headrest
 and closed her eyes.
 Luntz turned down the radio and kept
 his eyes going left and right, looking for a
 building, a sign, anything.
 After a while she opened her eyes.
 "What's the plan?"
 "So far the plan is I can't go back and I
 can't stay here. That's the plan so far."
 "You know what I mean. What's the
 plan?"
 Luntz stalled for 20 seconds, starting a
 cigarette. He set his lighter on the console
 between them. "I think if you're looking for
 a gunslinger, you better keep looking."
 "You said you shot Gambol."
 "Only in the leg. I should've put two
 more in his head, just in proper observance
 of the rules. Instead I took pity. You don't

want a guy with pity in his heart."
 "I'd like to know what the plan is."
 "I didn't say yes yet. Let's sit down with
 a paper and pen and map out the pros
 and cons."
 "Great."
 "Don't say great yet. Say great when I
 say yes."
 "I just hope I chose the right guy." When
 Luntz said nothing, she added, "Don't
 be insulted."
 "I'm not insulted. I just think it's bullshit
 for you to act like you had a choice."

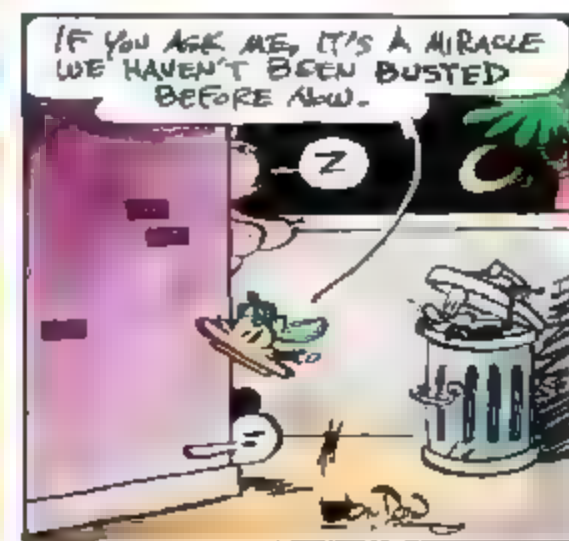
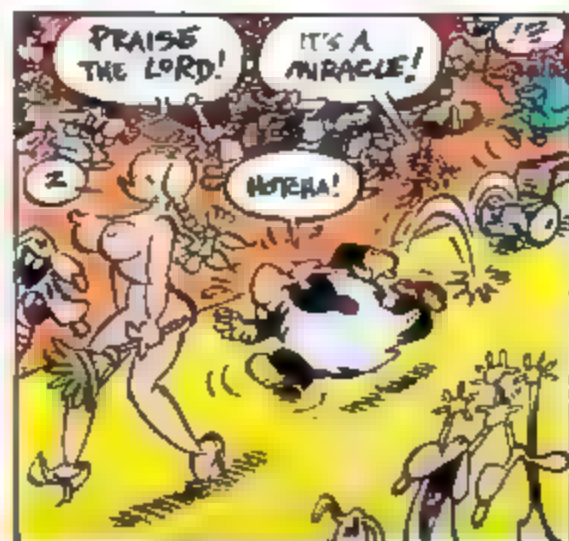
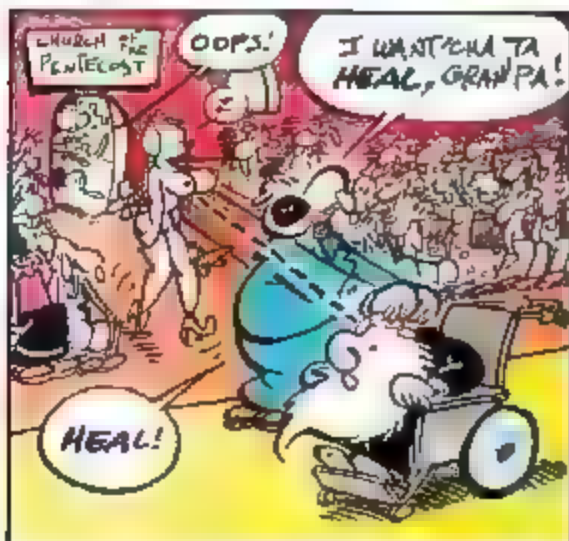
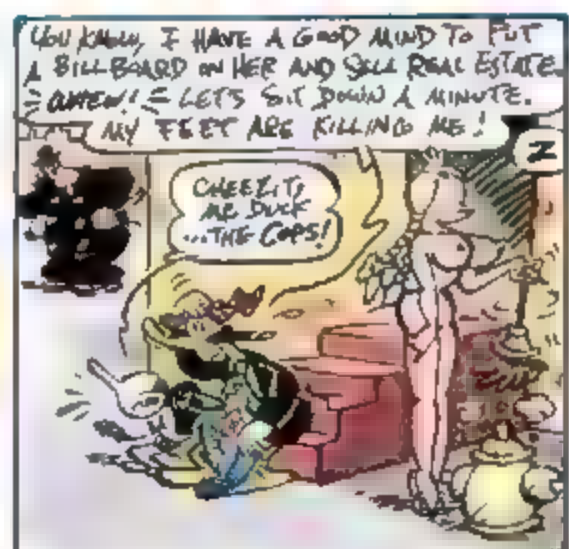
The woman was what they called a hefty
 blonde, in jeans and a sweatshirt and big
 pink fuzzy slippers. She smoked cigarettes
 and watched crime shows and lake judges
 on TV while Gambol nodded out and
 watched cartoons in his head. She laughed
 a lot at the shows, and when she laughed it
 woke him up, and he watched her.
 He said, "Where's the vet?"
 "Vet?"
 "Luntz said he knew a vet could fix me."
 "A vet, huh? I guess that's me," she said.
 "What kind of animals? Large? Like cat-
 tle? Or small like pets?"
 She laughed, took a drink from her
 glass—some kind of booze—and set it down
 and lit a cigarette. "I'm a veterinarian. I was an
 Army nurse for twenty-one years, three

mouths and six days. Dead with lots of com-
 bat trauma." She exhaled straight upward
 to avoid blowing smoke in his face. "I'm a
 veteran. Not a veterinarian."
 "What's your name, lady?"
 "Mary. What's yours?"
 "Fuck you."
 "That's what I thought."
 He nodded off and shot Luntz four times
 in the crotch, waited while he suffered and
 then left him with two in the head.

In the last light they parked the Caddy and
 got out. Behind the building the ground
 sloped toward a tiny shantytown by the
 river, half a dozen trailers, pickup trucks,
 a couple motorcycles. She asked him if this
 was some sort of gang hideout, and he said
 it was the Feather River Tavern, that's all.
 They entered a large cafe with a torn-
 up floor and secondhand tables and a
 view of spectacular cottonwoods drop-
 ping their seed tufts on the river in the
 dusk, and the trailers.
 Jimmy glanced at the man behind the
 counter and said "Wow" and sat down at
 a table with his back to the counter. "Sit
 there," he told Anita.
 She sat across from him. "Is that him?"
 "He's not the one I want." Jimmy sat touch-
 ing his fingertips together. "He looking?"
 "No."

Dirty Duck

by Barry London



Jimmy glanced over his shoulder at the man once more, quickly, and said, "Okay, I'll hit the head. Ask him about selling a Harley. Like we've got a bike to sell. Don't mention any names."

"He's coming over."

Jimmy stood. "Get me a Coke, okay?" He touched her arm with two fingers as he walked past her.

The other man approached. He was slumped and bony, and the knees of his jeans brushed together as he walked. "Got a special today, Trout?" He wore a red headband around a shaggy gray mullet.

"Maybe just a couple Cokes, please."

Behind the counter he opened two cans and poured them into glasses with ice, all the while looking at her with something other than the hunger of a man. Something more like envy. After she'd reached puberty her mother had looked at her like that.

He brought her the Cokes and set them down, each with a cocktail napkin. His fingers were long, the fingernails too. On his left ring finger he wore a large turquoise.

Anita said, "I have a Harley I might like to sell. Do you know anybody who could point me in the right direction?"

"John's out back. He'd be the one."

She sipped her Coke and wished for vodka. Jimmy came back from the can, hiding his face by wiping his nose with a paper towel, and sat down across from Anita again. "What did he say?"

"He said John's out back."

"That's the one I want."

He tossed down a five, and they left their Cokes and cocktail napkins and went out the front way and around the side of the building. Jimmy headed down the slope. She removed her high heels and followed, taking each step toes-first and dangling the pumps from the fingers of either hand.

Beside a teardrop aluminum trailer, a bearded biker in denim overalls sat on a flat-back chair, messing with an old guitar, the guitar flat on his lap and his head bent low. He didn't raise his head from this operation but said, "Getting too dark to see this shit."

Jimmy said, "Can you actually play that thing, Jay? I didn't know that."

"Got to get the strings in it first."

Jimmy said nothing more. The man raised his head. He placed his hands flat on his guitar. "I think what I want to say right here is 'What is the meaning of this?'"

Jimmy took a white handkerchief from his back pocket, spread it on the trailer's step, seated himself and said, "First of all."

The biker looked Anita over and then turned facing Jimmy and said nothing.

Jimmy said, "I'm not out to snitch on anybody, that's the first thing. All secrets remain completely secret."

"So far so good."

"This is Anita. This is my friend Jay Capra."

The man rose halfway and said to Anita, "You want to sit down?" She shook her head. He sat back down and held the guitar gently in his lap. "It's a strange world."

"Did you notice Santa Claus stopping by here one time last spring? That guy we call Santa Claus?"

"With the white beard."

"Works in a mall every Christmas."

"I saw him," Capra said. "I didn't think he saw me."

"Yeah. He did. He mentioned this place."

"Say hi to him next time."

"No," Luntz said, "no next time for me."

Capra kept quiet.

Jimmy placed his elbows on his knees and leaned forward. "Who's that dude in there, Capra? In the cafe? That's Sally Fuck."

"Just possibly. If so, his name would be Sol Fuchs. He's against being called Fuck. But the thing is—last names, man," Capra plucked one of the strings and turned a key on the instrument's neck and tightened it to a whine. "This is a pretty fucked-up situation. We're incognito here, you know?"

"All of us. All of us."

Anita held out her hand and said, Anita Desilvera. And this is my friend Jimmy Luntz.

Capra took her hand gently and said, "Okay. Now all our dicks are hanging out."

"Pleased and charmed."

Capra laughed. He stopped laughing, fucking Santa Claus. Who else knows?"

"Whoever he told. Nobody believed him."

"You did."

"Not really. But I'm in a wild mood, so I'm taking any long shot. Anything looks like action."

"What do you need, Jimmy?"

"Remember that time I let you stay with me and Shelly?"

"I owe you, Jimmy. That's a fact."

"We need to hunker down a minute. Get some options figured out."

Capra tangled his fingers in his beard and yanked at it. "How many days? I hope it's days, man, and not weeks."

"I don't know."

"Don't matter none. I owe you, and that's a fact. But it's Sol's place, not mine. All I can do is talk to Sol."

Anita said, "I'll next Wednesday."

"Wednesday's probably acceptable." Capra stood and set his guitar down on the seat of his chair and started up the hill. By now it was dark.

At the bottom of the staircase up the building's side Jimmy waited while she brushed the soles of her feet and put her shoes on, and then they climbed behind Capra up to the small landing. Capra worked a key and let them in and flipped a wall switch. A bed, a stove, a fridge. Wooden floor with the finish scratched off. For a curtain, a bedsheet. "You can eat in the restaurant for the usual price, or you can make a list and I'll bring you shit from the store in a box. It's up to you. I'll get Sol to go along as far as Wednesday."

From beneath them Anita felt the gigantic quiet of the empty establishment downstairs. "Is the restaurant closed?"

"Open for business. But most of the folks who come here are down in Bolinas for the biker convention." Capra looked her up and down and seemed to examine her face carefully. "So what happens Wednesday?"

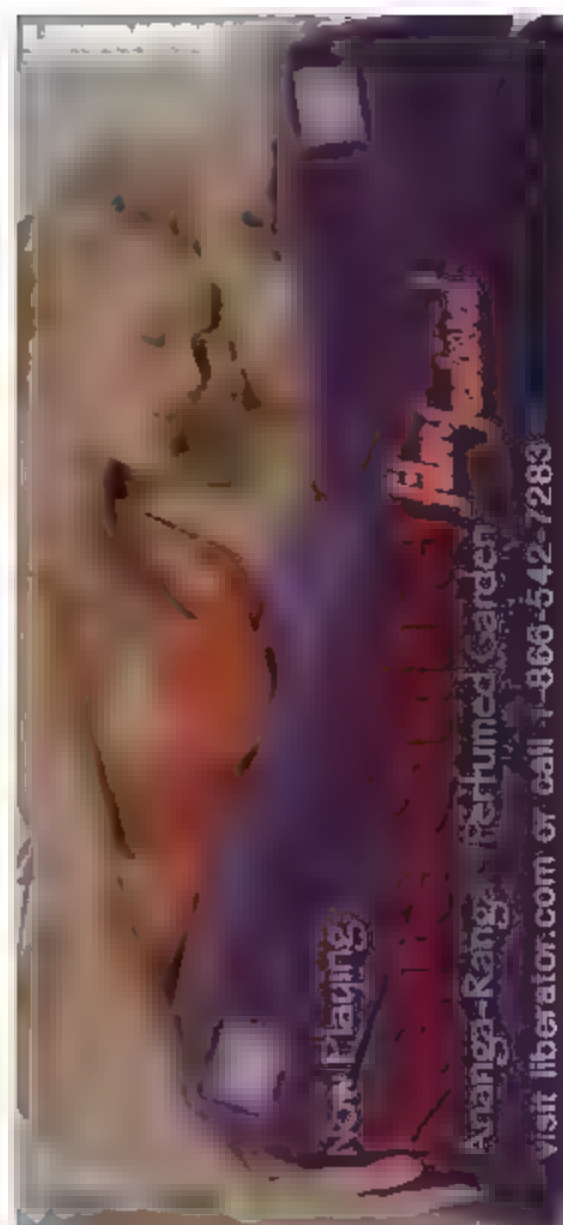
"Wednesday I go to court."

"Yeah. I know you."

"Nobody knows me."

"You're slightly infamous."

"All lies," Anita said.



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"Sol!" Jimmy said. "John Capra didn't die."
"Nope. My old lady wanted alimony. That's unacceptable. I cut her some slack. I walked."

"Like a real gentleman," Anita said.

"Yeah, it was, lady. I know twenty dudes would've taken her out to the Mojave and buried her alive for that shit."

"I didn't mean it," Anita said.

Capra put his hand on the doorknob and stared at her, but he was speaking to Jimmy. "This one got the beauty that goes down to the bone. High heels or barefoot, don't matter."

"She can sing, too."

"I can't tell if she's powered by a lot of soul or a lot of psycho electricity."

Anita said, "Do you always talk about people like they're invisible?"

"Usually just women."

It was one of those hippie-student pads smelling like cat shit, incense, a little dirty laundry, dirty dishes. She said, "Does somebody, you know—clean?" just to be a bitch.

"I said I owe him. I didn't say I was his slave." Capra shut the door softly behind him, and the windowpanes rattled as he went down the stairs.

Jimmy lit a cigarette and said, "Honey? I'm home!"

Anita said, "Is this a smoking room?"

"Yeah. I smoke."

"Well, fine. Smoke."

He blew smoke and opened what looked like a closet door. "Even a bathroom. No tub."

Anita sat on the bed. "Jeez, the mattress is like quicksand. Help!"

"Don't get lost. I'll be back." He went out the door, and she listened to the panes rattle while he descended, and then she settled back onto the bare leather pillow. It stank. A few minutes and someone shook the panes again coming up the stairs.

It was Sally—Sol—with sheets and a blanket. "Funky, funky, funky," he said, "but it's bigger than mine. I have a studio downstairs off the kitchen." He stood by the bed looking

haggard, though he smiled. "Might as well live near the job—I have to be in the kitchen by six AM anyhow. Can you stand it, honey?"

"Sure."

"The renter just moved out. The plan is we clean it up and move in next week. Me and Jay."

"You mean—you and Jay? Move in?"

"Move in. Me and Jay. That's the situation."

"Okay," she said.

"Might as well take a shot. At least he's not going anywhere. He's stuck."

"So you guys all knew each other somewhere. Alhambra."

"Alhambra, USA. Jimmy burned up the life down there, huh? Fact is, there's a real coincidence going on here. I got a little crazy down there myself."

"Well," she said.

"Who's after him? Is it the cops, or is it Gambol and Juarez and all those nice people?"

"I know he knows Gambol. But you know what? Jimmy shot him."

Sally still held the towels. Picking at the fabric with one hand. "Jimmy Luntz killed Gambol?"

"No. I don't think he's dead."

"Then Jimmy's dead."

"I don't think Jimmy'll hang around for that."

"Then what's Jimmy hanging around for now?" He looked at Anita. "Oh. Yeah."

When Sally was gone, Jimmy came back with his duffel and their J.C. Penney shopping bags and set them all down beside the bathroom door. "The earthly goods."

Anita said nothing, making the bed.

Jimmy put on a phony smile and stuck his hands in his pockets and watched How's old Sally Fuck doing.

"He seems nice enough."

"He's not, not nearly."

"Who's Juarez?"

Jimmy lit a cigarette.

"Or did he mean Juarez like the place?"

"Sally mentioned Juarez?" Jimmy took one drag and tossed his smoke through the

bathroom door into the toilet. "Juarez is not the place. He's a guy who owns a couple dumpy clubs and porn joints. Sally disappeared two or three years ago with a whole lot of money, and there's a bounty out for his head. It wasn't Juarez's money, but Juarez is the kind of guy who collects things."

"Like bounties."

"Yeah. You're quick. Listen. Whatever you do, don't talk to Sally about the situation."

"What situation?"

"Exactly. You got it. Don't talk to him."

Mary understood her patient was important to Juarez. Juarez had promised her 20 grand to get this man walking again. Juarez hadn't said what he'd give her if things went wrong.

To Mary the patient didn't look like anybody important. Long-armed, long-faced, with a heavy brow and deep-set melancholy eyes that made him seem thoughtful. But he was beginning to impress her as stupid. After every hypo of morphine sulfate he hopped on a cloud and held court for about 30 minutes. Apparently, he'd once eaten a man's testicles.

"Juarez ate one, and I ate one. No, her one of us puked. Because when I hate somebody, my hatred is bitter. It eats away inside me till I do something horrible to soothe it. It has to be the most horrible thing you could ever think of, or else the hatred won't stop eating."

He sat on the couch in Mary's pastel-blue bathrobe, his wounded leg laid out on the ottoman. It looked like a bloated corpse. She knew it hurt.

"I itch all over. I gotta piss. I haven't pissed in two days."

"Honey, you're on a morphine bash. You won't be able to piss till it's over."

"I know that loser," he said.

"Are you calling Juarez a loser?"

"Not Juarez. Jimmy Luntz."

She brought him the bedpan.

He gave her the finger. "Get that thing away from me."

"Just try and pee."

"I can't pee on cue."

"Ha ha."

"I like the way you laugh."

"Honey, that was fake."

In the nylon robe the patient looked ridiculous, holding his tool in his hand and steering it toward the metal pan, gazing at her, contented, doped up, expressionless. "Mary. Right?"

"Right."

"You are what we call a hefty blonde. You look about forty."

"I'm forty-four. Thirty-eight in the bust."

"Forty-four years old? That's okay. I used to like the young ones, but ever since my niece started growing a bust herself, I changed my taste. Now the young ones all look like my niece."

Mary tossed the empty ampoule under the sink. "Enjoy yourself, big guy. That was the last happy hypo. After this it's just oxy codone and amoxicillin."

"I'm trying to straighten her out. She got arrested for shoplifting."

(continued on page 133)



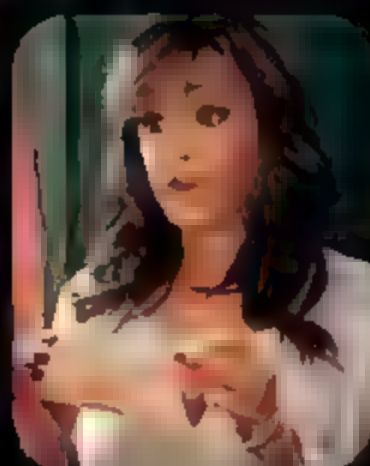
COCHRAN

"I told you not to order the chef's surprise!"

PLAYMATE NEWS



IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE MOTHERHOOD



For *In the Motherhood*, Jenny McCarthy, Chelsea Handler (near left) and Leah Remini (above) must act their way out of precarious scenarios real-life moms dream up. The webisodes are hilarious and short—so busy moms without half an hour to watch TV can be entertained before junior starts scribbling on the wall again.

Sure, *Law & Order* is ripped from today's headlines, but mercifully few of us can relate to being the victim of a violent crime. *In the Motherhood* could touch a lot more people. It's a series based on the lives of real moms: They write scripts, then send them to inthemotherhood.com; the best are made into short webisodes. The three main on-screen mothers are played by Leah Remini, Chelsea Handler and our Miss October 1993 Jenny McCarthy. Jenny's character is the well-manicured Kelly, who

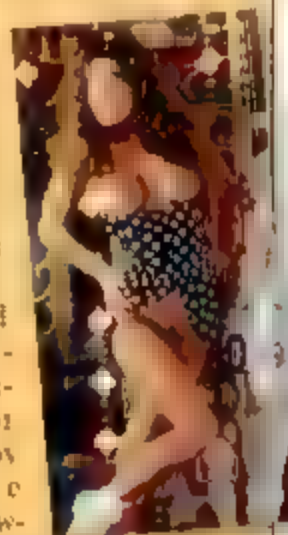
thinks she's always right. Method acting? "Only a mother can comprehend what *In the Motherhood* means," Jenny says. "Mothers have a whole different kind of philosophy and lifestyle that only another mom understands. There are certain scenarios that happen in a mother's life that we have to deal with."

The webisodes have recorded 21 million views, prompting ABC to option the franchise. Look for extended versions of the show to be broadcast on TV in the near future.

15 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Miss August 1993 and October 1994 cover girl

proved Playmates can do more than all out a sundress when she competed successfully in triathlons for the Playboy X-Treme team. Nowadays she runs Primitive Planters, a business that sells fabric plant hangers.



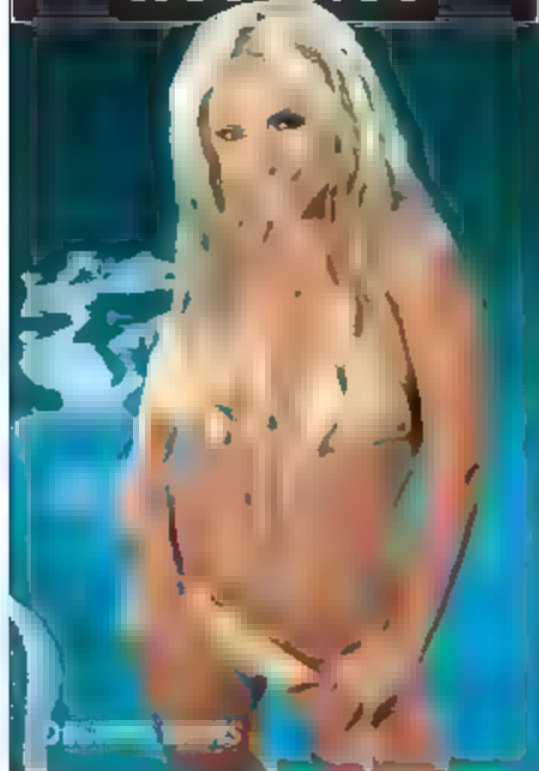
LOOSE LIPS



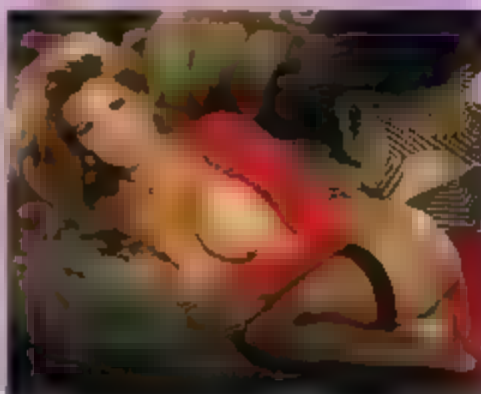
BOOB-TUBE QUIZ



HOT SHOT



MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE



POP QUESTIONS: CHARLOTTE KEMP

Q: Have you been busy?

A: Not really. I recently moved to the Houston area, and I either play tennis or hang out by the pool.

Q: That sounds relaxing. Are you not working these days?

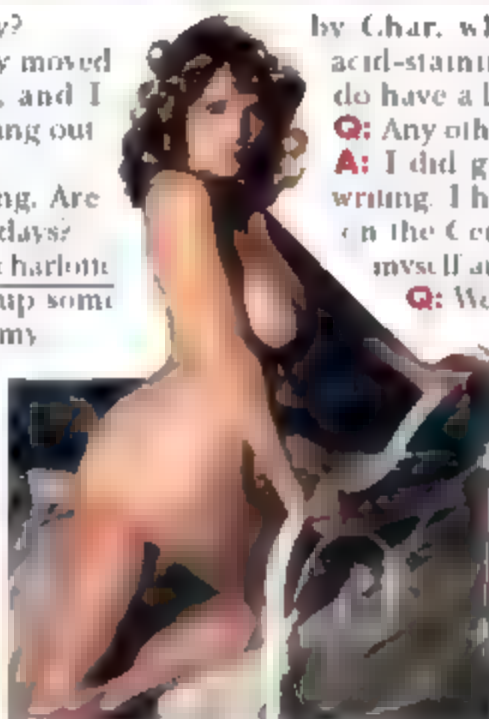
A: Well, I often update charlottekemp.com. I just put up some videos of myself and my Playmate friends.

Q: You do know how to throw a party.

A: Oh, that reminds me: A girlfriend and I just started an event-planning company called *Jote de Vivre*.

Q: So you are busy.

A: My sister and I also run *Fauxcrete*



by Char, which is a business for acid-staining furniture. Maybe I do have a lot going on.

Q: Any other projects?

A: I did get back to my passion writing. I have been writing a book on the Centerfold experiences of myself and other Playmates.

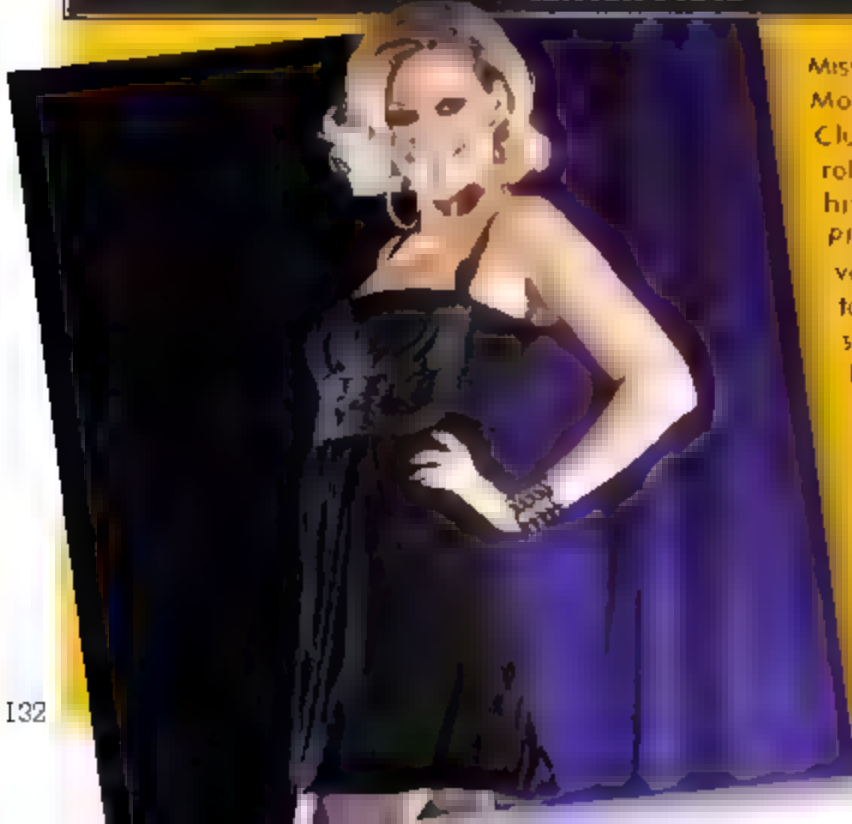
Q: We didn't know you wrote.

A: Yep, I'm actually working on my master's degree in English at the University of Houston.

Q: Do your classmates recognize you?

A: No, and that's fine. I get the best grades in class, so they probably think of me as "that bitch." Ha!

CENTER PIECE



Miss December 2001 Shanna Moakler was at L.A.'s Key Club in April to reprise her role in its production of the hit off Broadway comedy *PIECES of Ass*. The provocative interactive show tackles the perks and pressures of being pretty. Rotating cast members have included Rachel Hunter, Brooke Burke, and Jamie Lynn Sigler. While the show's title may at first sound crude, Shanna, who got to write her own sketch, calls the experience empowering.

PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Miss March 1972 Ellen Michaels has found a new passion on the other side of the camera—as a nature photographer. Interestingly, her wildlife subjects live in New York City. She trains her lens on animals in Central Park and on the locally famous Fifth Avenue hawk Pale Mate. "Pale Mate actually assumed the same pose for my camera as I assumed for the famous Salsoul Orchestra poster for which I am known," she tells us. Ellen has been posting her pictures on New York City's Audubon Society website.... If there is a cool event with a hyperexclusive guest list, it's never a surprise to see Miss February 1990 Pam Anderson there, but would you believe she attended the White House Correspondents' Association dinner? Well, she did, and she

Ellen Michaels's all-natural photography.

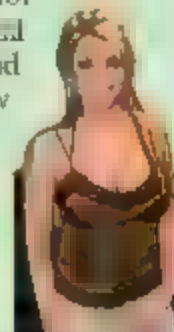


Pam Anderson wows news-hounds

ready turned heads in a town John McCain has called "Hollywood for ugly people." From the New York *Daily News*, "Geeky male policy wonks and ink-stained reporters mobbed the former Mrs. Tommy Lee for photo ops and close-up

glances at her anatomical assets...." Miss April 2005 Courtney Culin walked the streets of Manhattan to raise money for AIDS research. "Even though there has been a lot of publicity about drug treatments that are prolonging some people's lives, they don't work for everyone, and there is still no cure in sight," she said before AIDS Walk New York. Courtney was able to earn more than \$3,000 for the cause.

Courtney Culin walks with a purpose



MORE PLAYMATES

See your favorite Playmate's pictorial in the Cyber Club at cyber.playboy.com or download her to your phone at playboymobile.com.

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Shanna Moakler 2. Tommy Lee 3. Kelly Rowland 4. Holly Hunter 5. Playmate

NOBODY MOVE

(continued from page 130)

"Who?"
 "My niece. Aren't you listening?"
 "Sure. And taking notes."
 "I'm trying to tell her a few things, get her lined up for the future. She says there is no future."
 "Pee, or put your dick away."
 "Her dad just died. My kid brother. Thirty-seven years old. Allergic reaction."
 "Reaction to what?"
 "Fuck if I know."
 "You better find out. If it runs in the family—"
 "Tim and I were the last men in the family. Now it's me. If I croak, the family name is erased."
 "What's the name?"
 "Just call me Ernest."
 "Not Ernest."
 "What do you think?"
 "Okay. Ernest."
 "Yeah. Okay. What about a happy ending?"
 "Not dying when somebody shoots you is about as happy as it gets."
 "Do you know what I mean? Like the massage girls? I mean a blow job. That's a happy ending."
 "Happy for you, is all. For me it's a mouthful of fuckwad."
 "What's Juarez paying you for all this medical care?"
 "Enough to get four acres in Montana."
 "I'll put five on top of it."
 "Five what?"
 "Five K."
 "For a blow job?"
 "For nothing. For saving my ass. Like a thank-you."
 "You're welcome. Now close your pretty robe."

Juarez called. Gambol couldn't make sense of the conversation. Juarez said, or Gambol said, "Fucking Luntz." One of them said "Fucking Luntz."

"Gambol. You there?"
 "Yeah."
 "Then talk. Don't just breathe. I been hearing from him time to time."
 "Who?"
 "Fucking Luntz. This asshole makes my stomach hurt. He refuses to behave, and he refuses to make sense. I hate him."
 "Fucking Luntz."
 "It's embarrassing to hate your enemy. When you're cold, that's better. Then you can move. You're more precise—you know where respect comes from. When you're precise. Gambol. Gambol."
 "Yeah."
 "Are you using a cell phone? What's her phone?"
 "No."
 "Is it a cell phone?"
 "I said no."
 "Fucking cell phones, you never know what with them."
 "I like her."
 "Mr. Gambol... Jesus."
 "Put five K on top. That's from me."

"Definitely. Whatever you need."
 "Whatever she wants."
 "Sure. How doped up are you?"
 "Who?"
 "Good. But not too much. Put Mary on. She there?"
 "She's always here." Gambol stuck the phone in Mary's face and closed his eyes.

Luntz preferred shows with plenty of skin, but tonight he had no opinion. He let Anita control the remote and sat in the only chair with his legs straight out and his ankles crossed, staring at his brown socks and dipping his ashes in a coffee cup. She sat against the wall in the bed in her pin-striped pantsuit. One channel after another.

Around 10 they turned in. She wore her bra and panties to bed. They lay side by side, Luntz in his boxers and T-shirt. He rested his cheek on his outstretched arm and tried conversing. She told him she felt sweaty and asked him to keep his distance. He tried touching her bare shoulder with his finger. His hand shook. She turned to the wall, and then she asked to have the outside half of the bed. He got up for that, found one window that wasn't stuck and raised it three inches. Anita turned the television back on.

He put on his pants and shoes and went down the stairs.

The cafe was closed, but there was light in there from somewhere. He banged on the door. Turned his back and watched the road. Not one car.

Sally opened the door. "Jimmy Luntz, as I live and breathe."

Luntz said, "God. There's a lot of stars here."

"Please don't call me God. I'm a sinner like you."

"Where's Capra?"

"Zonked in his Airstream. I won't go in there. It smells like socks."

Luntz brought his wrist close to his face. It's only eleven.

"You want to set a couple of chairs out back? And wrap up in blankets and listen to the river and watch the stars?"

"What for?"

"Exactly. Exactly, man."

"Sell me some booze."

Back upstairs again, he stripped to his underwear while she poured a big one, not too much Sprite, and got half of it down without pausing for breath.

"You do drink like an Indian."

"Or else my pants wouldn't have come off last night, so don't complain." She lay back, raising her drink like a torch to keep it level, and slipped two fingers into the elastic of her panties and snaked them down around her thighs and ran two fingers over her mound, back and forth, and looked right at him until he was forced to clear his throat and swallow. The crushed ice sloshed in the go cup as she finished her Popov and Sprite and set the cup aside.

The TV emitted a small steady roar. In the show a man clung to the side of a speeding train. Luntz let the TV run so he could see her by its light. All through their lovemaking Anita kept quiet, but she

looked right at him. When she came, she said, "No. No. No."

Next morning Anita seemed morose, sitting naked on the bed's edge, staring at her clothes all bunched up together on the floor. He came out of the shower and found her like that. She didn't look at him. He sat beside her on the bed and towed his hair and lassoed her around the shoulders with the towel, holding the ends in either hand, and she didn't seem to mind.

He studied the general moment, taking the atmospheric temperature, and let her go. "What's on TV?" he said. "I usually watch in the daytime."

"No. Really?"

"I get up late and just stay in bed and burn the daylight down."

"A night person."

"That's right, yeah. I blend in better that way."

"Not the outdoor type."

"My idea of a health trip is switching to menthols and getting a tan," he said. "I don't like push-ups, sit-ups, ex cetera. Ex cetera. I mean." He'd been corrected in this several times but always forgot.

"You're cute enough," she said, "but you got a sissy body."

"Didn't you know that?"

"What?"

"That it's ex cetera, not ex cetera."

"Yeah, man, I did. I just didn't feel like embarrassing you," she said and headed for the bathroom.

When she came out he told her, "I watched you going to the shower and I thought I was gonna break down crying."

"Oh," she said.

"Come here." She sat beside him, both of them naked, and he kissed her, and the temperature felt better. "I'd like to try it sober."

"Can we wait till after breakfast, when I'm not hungover?"

"Sure. Let's go downstairs. What are we having?"

"Beer."

"No problem. Day or night, Sally can fix it."

"Is he sleeping in the other guy's trailer? Who's the other guy again?"

"Capra."

"Where do they sleep? Downstairs or in the trailer?"

"Who? Sally and Capra? They don't sleep together."

"Sally told me they're moving in together."

"Wow. No shit."

"That's the story."

"If it's love, it's love," he said. "I had a woman I lived with off and on for—Jesus six years. And it was never love. And if it ain't love, it ain't love."

"I'll tell you what's love. Jimmy Luntz loves to state the obvious."

"Don't piss on my philosophy."

"I'm just hungover. And I'm scared."

"Or what?"

"You name it."

"No. You name it."

"Yesterday, today and tomorrow. Any thing else—hell, I'll spit right in its face."

"What do you mean? There's nothing else."

"See? Boy loves to state the obvious."

When they made love a while later he tasted a little beer on her breath, but she was sober. They lay together afterward, and she rested her leg over his. They watched a show on TV about the miracles of forensic science, and Anita told him it was a bogus show. "There are six thousand unsolved murders a year in this country."

"Let's hope so," he said and switched it off.

"What now?"

"Let's do what I always do."

"Which is?"

"Double down, honey."

"You want to try me in a different position?" The way she said it, his throat tightened and he couldn't answer.

She asked him to go on his knees by the bed—while she sat on the edge with her feet on the floor and her legs apart—and get into her that way.

"I didn't work, Anita said, "You're too——"

"I'm not eight feet tall, yeah. It can't happen."

But she liked it fine the regular way and called him Daddyman and cried no, no, no when she came. He lay beside her and dried the sweat between her breasts with a corner of the bedsheet. Then to keep from asking questions he sat up and put his feet on the floor and lit a cigarette. But she touched his back with her fingers, and the question asked itself: "Why are you with me?"

"I like a bad man who hates himself. I want all the bad people to hate themselves."

"Are you bad, Anita?"

"Yes."

"Do you hate yourself?"

"Not enough."

Luntz went down once around three P.M. and came back upstairs with burgers and fries and soft drinks and vodka. She made love like a drunken nun, and he liked that, but the conversation afterward was not at all aimless or relaxed. "What you really want," he told her, "is revenge."

"Yeah. I've fantasized about revenge. Do you want to hear how sick it gets?"

"No."

"The judge has the money. Or half of it at least."

"What about Hank?"

"I'll take care of Hank."

Luntz said, "You don't hide two million in a shoe. They've got it in some offshore account."

"The judge is a sick old man. When we put two guns in his face, he'll come up with it. We'll make him transfer it."

"Must be eleven felonies in that scenario."

"Unreported felonies. You can't steal stolen money. If a tree falls in the forest and nobody hears it, did it really make a sound? Fuck no!"

Luntz said, "You're the sure shot. In my whole life, I've fired exactly one bullet."

Anita said, "I can knock bottles off a fence all day. But I'm not the guy who shot a guy."

Blondie sat on the ottoman, helping him with leg lifts.

"What's your name again?"

"Mary."

"How much more of this shit?"

"I'll say. Or else you'll lose muscle mass, and you'll gimp around for months."

"It looks good. I mean the sutures and all, a very professional job. Were you in a war?"

"I was on a hospital ship off Panama during that thing and at the Army hospital in Frankfurt during the first Gulf. And I did six months in Iraq in oh-three."

"No shit. Where'd you get all the equipment?"

"Stole it. I work as a temp sometimes, in different clinics. And the hospital."

"You sell it out of your garage or what?"

"Nope. I just like to steal things."

She helped him lie on his belly on the couch and started an alcohol rub between his shoulder blades. He told her, "Baby, don't ever stop."

"That's what they all say."

"I'm sorry if your car's ruined."

"No, man, I know gunshot wounds are bloody. I had the whole backseat and floor covered in plastic sheets all ready for you."

As he spoke, lying there under her pleasant hands, he felt his chin lifting his head up and down. "I guess this whole business is pretty fucked, huh? Guy with a hole in his leg just shows up and moves in."

"I don't mind. It's got some reality to it. Like war."

"So how did our boy talk you into this?"

"He sends me money every month."

"Why?"

"Because my attorney said so."

"You were married to Juárez?"

"I know what you think—I got fat and middle-aged and he dumped me. But no, he dumped me way before that. Then I joined the service."

She helped him ease over onto his back, and she began on his shoulders and chest.

"Are you a natural blonde?"

"None of your business," she said, "but yes, I sure am."

"How'd you get mixed up with a Mexican?"

"Hey, Mexicans are human too."

"I'm just curious. Wait," he said as she moved her hands to his legs, "you're skipping the important part."

"How well do you know Juárez?"

"We go way back."

"Not as far as me," she said. "Ever wonder why Juárez doesn't have any Mexican friends? Why he's not in with a totally Chicano gang with headbands and tattoos and all that? I mean, where's his Mexican buddies? It's because he's not Mexican. He's Jordanian. And partly Greek, I think."

"You mean Juárez is an Arab?"

"Arab, yeah. His name is Muhammed Kwa-something."

"He's a fucking Muslim?"

"What? I don't know." She put her hands lightly on his groin.

Gambol pushed her hands away, gripped the back of the couch and hauled himself to a sitting position. "I could've called any one of a thousand guys on the phone to get my ass out of that culvert. And not one of them would've done it. Only Juárez."

She tried to close the robe for him, gave up, moved to the end of the couch, wide-eyed. "Sorry."

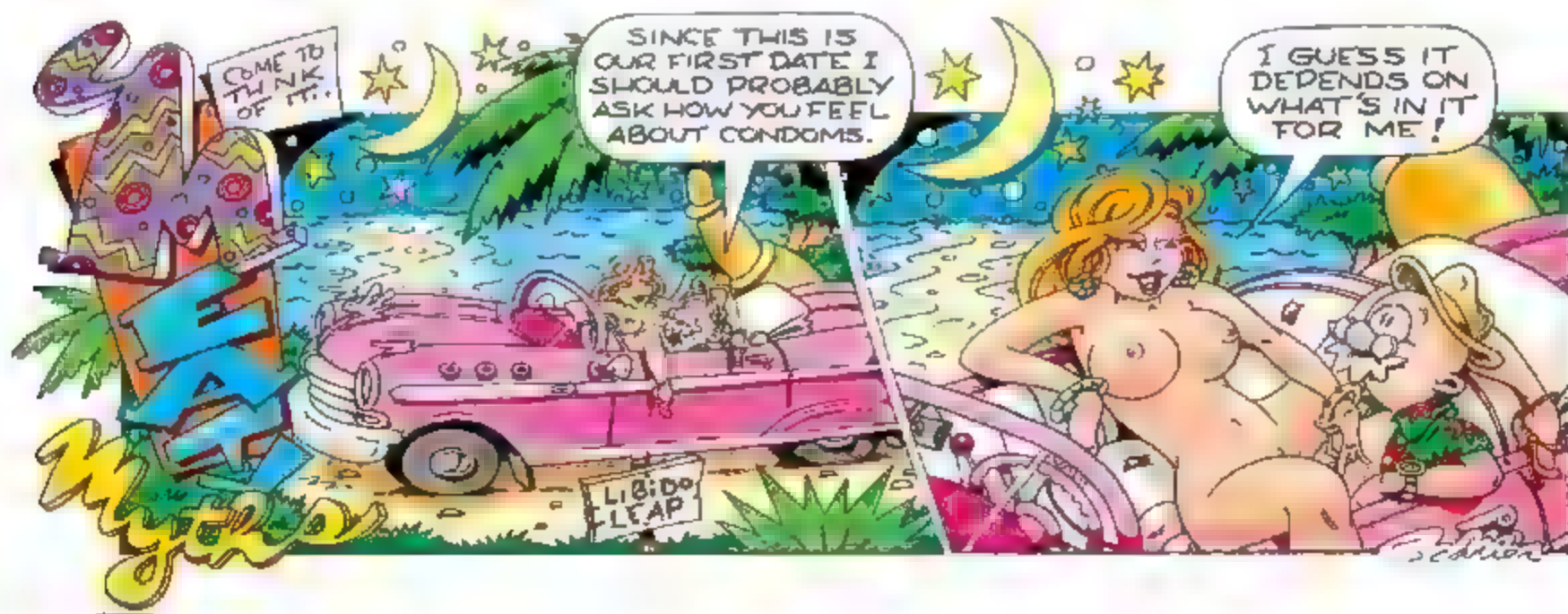
"Juárez is not a fucking Muslim."

"I didn't say he was. Sorry."

"Come here. I'm going to come in your face."

"Lie back down and keep the leg elevated." She stood up and gave him the finger. "You're not ready for target practice."

With her lipstick in one hand and the bottle in the other, she took two swallows of Popov,



and it went down like mother's milk. Jimmy wrested it away from her and screwed the cap on and said, "No drunks in court."

She leaned into the mirror and got her lips just right. She turned to him. "I'm nervous."

"Beautiful women don't get nervous." He rested one hand on her shoulder. "Just cross your fingers and stay calm. And don't talk fast."

"I've seen it done." He escorted her down the stairs. Just before she got in the car, he took out his wallet and handed her five \$100 bills. "Hey, No."

"Take it. You're with me now." As she got into the Caddy, he said, "Remember," and raised two crossed fingers—"and don't talk fast."

He shut the door for her as she turned the key. She gunned it twice. He tapped a finger on her window, and she lowered it all the way.

He put his forearms on the sill and leaned toward her and said, "Let's get it."

"For real?"

"Yeah."

"Don't say it if it isn't real." "I've more or less done the hard part, which is gunning down a member of the gangster police force. I declare their shit null and void." His eyes were wide and his face tight with fear.

Mary came in from the store and set two white plastic bags of groceries on the kitchen counter. The next thing she did was light a cigarette. She wore a skirt today.

Gambol held out the classifieds and shook them at her. "Call this guy."

"Who?" "Buy the gun. He's offering a case of ammo, too, but don't take it. Is there a gun store in town?"

"How would I know that?"

"Look in the book for a gun shop. Get me some MagSafe ammo for a three-fifty-seven Magnum. They come in packs of five or six. Get me ten packs. You need me to write that down."

"Don't strain your mind." She opened a drawer in the kitchen and found a pen and pad. Sat on the coffee table and placed her cigarette on the ashtray's edge and crossed her legs like a secretary. She had good legs. "Say again."

"MagSafe. Three-fifty-seven Magnum. Ten packs. And a box of fifty regular rounds, too—the cheapest, it doesn't matter. And get me clothes, three of everything: extra-large shirts, extra-large T-shirts. At least a forty-inch waist for the shirts. And forty-two waist and thirty-six length for the slacks. I'll reimburse you later. And shoes, jogging shoes. Eleven-E."

"It won't be the same, you without your cute robe."

He looked at her legs.

"Ernest. What are you looking at?"

"Let me ask you something. What did you think, fighting against the Arabs and knowing you used to be married to a fucking Arab? That one of them used to fuck you?"

"Hey, Arabs are human too."

Gambol ground his thumb down onto

the burning ember in the ashtray and extinguished it. "And get a new robe for yourself. Get a short one."

Gambol examined the gun. It looked fine. When he needed to know for sure, he could take it five miles in any direction and find a place where gunshots wouldn't disturb anybody.

Mary stood before him until he noticed her.

Gambol said, "Jesus Christ."

"Is this the kind of robe you had in mind?"

She unfastened the belt of Gambol's robe, and he said, "I told you—no bedpan."

"That's not what I'm doing," she said and knelt before him.

He watched her. She enjoyed what she was doing, he saw that. And he smelled breakfast cooking, too.

She paused and raised her face to him. "Juarez didn't pull you out of that culvert, I did."

She lowered her face to him.

Luntz unzipped the duffel bag. He laid the shotgun on the bed.

Capra didn't touch it. "Pistol grip's illegal in California."

"And smoking's illegal. Everything."

Capra ran one finger along its length. "Where'd you get it?"

"Won it in a poker game."

"Do you have evil intentions?"

"I thought I might sell it or something."

"How much you want for it?"

"I don't know. I might keep it. If I knew how to use it."

Capra hosted the gun. "Watch my thumb. See this button?" Luntz watched as Capra ran the slide back and forth repeatedly—*click-ack! click-ack! click-ack!*—and eight red shells popped out one by one onto the mattress. "Well, don't travel with it loaded, for one thing. Cops frown on that shit. Anyway"—as he ran the slide back and forth again, *click-ack!*—"that's all you need to do, right there. You hear sinister noises downstairs, just"—*click-ack!*—"and to an intruder, that's the ugliest sound in the world."

"How do you get the shells back in?"

"Under here. You want 'em out, push this button like I showed you and run the action. And this one is your safety. Red side out means safety off. Push it in and your trigger don't pull."

Luntz accepted the gun from his hands and slipped the shells back into the magazine one by one and made sure he had the safety on. "I think I'm considering a little move."

"Obviously."

"I'd be willing to accept some help."

"Jimmy, I'm not like that. If I was like that, my ex wife would be dead."

Luntz replaced the gun in the duffel and zipped it shut and shoved it his whole arm's length under the bed.

"Unload it," Capra said. "You going to unload it?"

"No," Luntz said.

"Don't let Sol find out about that weapon. He's skittish."

"You always used to call Sally Sally."

WHERE & HOW TO BUY

Below is a list of retailers and manufacturers you can contact for information on where to find this month's merchandise. To buy the apparel and equipment shown on pages 88-89 and 96-97, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.

JOSH PECK

Pages 88-89: *Armani Jeans*, available at select Bloomingdale's locations. *Gant*, 212-818-9170. *Geoffrey Beene*, macys.com. *John Varvatos Star USA*, johnvarvatos.com. *Rock & Republic*, available at Nordstrom. *Schott*, schottnyc.com.

COWBOY UP

Pages 96-97: *Haspel*, haspel.com. *Isata*, 216-831-0488. *Pendleton*, pendleton-usa.com. *Seaward & Stearn of London*, britishapparel.com. *Wrangler*, pbrnow.com/shop.

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like everybody else."

"Things change."

"If it's love, it's love."

"I'm just saying things change, man."

"Don't I know it?"

Capra put his hand on the doorknob but stood still. "Jimmy."

"Yeah."

"You've gotten quiet. I like it."

Juarez called. He told Gambol, "A really funny thing happened."

"I'm not in a mood for funny."

"This is a really funny thing. But it's not for this kind of phone. This is a pay-phone-to-pay-phone kind of funny thing. Call me in ten minutes."

"I don't have any pants on."

"What?"

"I won't repeat myself."

"What are you wearing, honey?"

"Fuck you. Give me two hours. I need an hour just to get my pants on. Make it four o'clock."

"Exactly four o'clock P.M. Get some pants. I then get ready to laugh your pants off."

He did sound like an Arab.

She didn't know if she talked fast or slow. She forgot to cross her fingers. She didn't glance once at Hank, not once, that much she knew. That was the important thing.

Afterward, outside the courthouse, Hank gave her back the key to the house. Just walked up and handed it to her like a flower. "Babylove. Come on over. You've got a couple things at the place."

"A couple? My whole life is in that house."

"We don't have to break off contact."

"The fuck we don't. Five days ago in the Packard Room you didn't have anything more for me than Cajun chicken."

"Five days ago the last nail wasn't in."

"In my coffin."

"Poor choice of words."

He wore a tailored charcoal suit. His shirt looked like cream.

"How much did you pay for that tie?"

"Money's no object. Not lately, Babylove."

"Do you have some formula you're working here? You call me Babylove X times and poof you're not a piece of shit."

"I am a piece of shit." He put his hands in his pockets and smiled. He wasn't that good-looking. He simply had this way about him that suggested it was his party and the human race was lucky to be his guest.

"You never let me in. You ripped off two point three million dollars and never mentioned it. And then you framed me for it."

He said, "Somebody has to be the designated bad guy."

"Why can't the real bad guy be the bad guy?"

"In this kind of situation, that honor goes to the cutest. You're the cutest."

"What an honor."

"The one they'll punish least. I'm not as cute as you. I know it's cold-blooded, and I'm horrible and mean, but lift your head up and take in the scenery here. Does it look like prison? It's over, and we're both standing on the street."

"Meanwhile I pay eight hundred a month, and no job."

"Babylove. Wake up. It's over."

"Eight hundred a month for life. How over is that?"

"Are you staying around?"

"What do you think?"

"I'm not staying around either. Why don't we not stay around together."

"Do I look that desperate? All I need in this world is half a tank of gas to get to the next man. And he's a better man than you."

"Don't kill me. Don't you know you can kill me, talking that way? I'm the one who's desperate."

"You lie and you lie and you lie."

"What do you want? Just tell me."

I want to see you grovel.

"I'm groveling now. How do you like it?"

"I love it. That tie must've cost two hundred dollars."

"There's more where that came from. Why don't we share the wealth?"

She turned around and left. She didn't look back.

Later she drove by the house. He probably wasn't home. No reason he'd be home at 11 A.M. But his gray Lexus sat in the driveway. The Lexus didn't mean he was home. He might be driving a second car. He could afford one. He could own eight cars by now. He could be heading a parade of newly purchased automobiles down Main Street. In her shaking hand the key chain jingled. She put the key in the lock. She swung open the door. He was home. "Babylove," he said. "I'm pouring you a drink."

Seven minutes later he went down on the floor by the bed. She said, "I like you on your knees, Daddyman."

She saw tears in his eyes.

She was weeping too. "Now beg."

Ernest Gambol proceeded into the traffic and across the street, looking neither right nor left, setting his aluminum cane down hard with each step forward. The pain was good pain. Different than before.

He entered the parking lot of the Circle K. As he passed behind the Wonder bread truck idling out front, its reverse lights flared. He struck the nearest one with his cane and shattered it. He made his way to the pay phone, where he rested his weight on both feet equally and allowed four minutes to pass. He punched the buttons and called the pay phone out front of O'Doul's.

Juarez answered. "Alhambra here."

"It's me."

"Are you ready to laugh?"

"I'm ready."

"You got your pants on?"

"Jesus Christ."

"Are you ready?"

"I said I was."

"Do you remember Sally Fuck?"

To be continued

Look for the next installment of *Nobody Move* in the September 2008 issue of **PLAYBOY**

BEN STILLER

(continued from page 52)

you spend a lot of time in them. On the other hand I'm not Matthew McConaughey, who has literally lived in an Airstream trailer for the past 10 years or something.

PLAYBOY: What's so special about your trailer?

STILLER: It's not like I did anything fancy. But why not be able to have the place you're spending 12 to 14 hours a day in be comfortable?

PLAYBOY: But what makes the Ben Stiller trailer different from the standard star wagon?

STILLER: It's 500 feet wide and 90 feet tall. It's the largest man-made trailer on the North American continent. It has built-in speakers and a trampoline because, as you know, I'm a tumbler. No, come on—it's just a regular trailer. Nothing groundbreaking. The big difference is, it doesn't have to be disinfected.

It's risky having my own trailer, though, because then I have to be happy with it. I can't complain to the movie company about us not being big enough. "My trailer's not big enough!" "But you made it!" Same thing when you're directing and acting in a movie. What can you do, yell at yourself?

PLAYBOY: Because of things like the trailer, most people assume your life is pretty cushy. What is the biggest fear you've had to overcome?

STILLER: I've been lucky in my life. But the scariest thing I've been through did not involve cameras and directors. I can tell you that. It was when my son, Quin, was born. The doctors told us there were complications. He suffered a trauma because he inhaled amniotic fluid, which has waste in it. So he was in a neonatal intensive-care unit for three days. That was the most fearful time I've ever had. I felt totally out of control. There wasn't anything I could do. It was surreal seeing all those little babies who are there for weeks at a time and the stress it puts on the families. We became friendly with the parents of the baby in the incubator next to Quin's. This little kid had to have three surgeries, and he was only a few weeks old. I got a letter from his mom about six months ago, saying their son hadn't made it, that was crushing. You go through something like that and you realize there are no guarantees in life. You have to be thankful day to day.

PLAYBOY: How's Quin doing now?

STILLER: He's great. You've never seen a more healthy, fun-loving kid. And here's the irony: He's the funny one in the family.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever think of just packing it in?

STILLER: Sometimes I say to Christine, "Let's just get out of here and buy a farm in Virginia." I think I saw somewhere that somebody—maybe it was Robert Duval—lives on a farm. I read that and it was like, Oh wow, that's what I've got to do.

PLAYBOY: Is it?

STILLER: [Laughs] I seriously doubt that's going to happen. A farmer? It's probably a hard thing to learn at 42. Now that I'm talking about it, it sounds terrifying. I think I'll stick with what I'm doing for a while.



ASHLEY

(continued from page 102)

darling," says trainer Nick Bollettieri, who is credited with developing Andre Agassi and Monica Seles. "But cute gets you only so far. Ashley's a son-of-a-bitch tenacious competitor who's racking up victories. The woman is a powerhouse."

Then again, she'll tell you she just likes the game. "I grew up playing tennis for the fun of it," says Ashley, who came of age in tiny Flintstone, Georgia, where her nickname, naturally, was Pebbles. Though she was a precocious athlete, her big break came when her grandfather sent her to a tennis academy. "It was a big deal, at 11 or 12, to suddenly be practicing with the likes of Jennifer Capriati. I mean, I had a poster of Jennifer on my wall, and here I was hitting with her."

Soon Ashley became a poster girl herself. After her victories in prestigious juniors tournaments, Nike signed her to a lucrative contract, and the courtside paparazzi perked up. "I played at Wimbledon and saw pictures that showed my butt for three days in a row in the paper," she says.

Ashley rolls her eyes when saying this, but she certainly understands why there's so much fuss. "Of all athletes, women tennis players are the sexiest," she says. "When you play so much, you can't help but get a great body. Everything's toned. Your legs look great, your ass is tight, and you show it all off because you can't wear too much when you're playing."

All that translates into performing better off the court as well. "I do think athletes have better sex," she asserts with a bashful giggle. "Who wants a waxy girl with no definition to her body? I like that I have some power and that everything's tight." Also, she notes, exercise increases stamina: "So when you're doing, you know, other things, you can just keep going and going."

Ashley clasps her hands over her mouth at this admission; after all, she grew up singing in church and once got a Jesus-fish tattoo. But there's no conflict. "Posing in PLAYBOY is a big deal to me," she says. "I still believe in God, but God made female athletes beautiful and sexy, and I want to represent that."

She has certainly needed faith at times in her career. A few years ago the pressure of playing professionally started to get to her. "I was rising up the ladder, and I just wasn't enjoying any of it."

Part of the problem was that Ashley's natural sense of competition had escalated into a fierce battle with herself. "I became completely fixated on practicing and exercising and worrying about everything I ate," she says. "I was so afraid to gain weight, I'd go into major competitions having drunk nothing but water. I knew I had to stop."

At 19 she entered a treatment program for her addictions to overtraining and counting calories. "I needed to get right again," she says. "It doesn't matter how many tournaments you win if you aren't

Among her rivals, Ashley singles out Argentina's Gisela Dulko and Russia's Maria Kirilenko as the top hotties. "There are a lot of beautiful girls on the tour. I'm just one among many."

That said, Ashley was never particularly comfortable being compared to Kournikova. Part of it may be personal. Ashley's ex-husband, Alex Bogomolov Jr., was a top-100 tennis pro born in Russia. "He and Anna were friends," Ashley says. "They called each other cousin even though they weren't related. He lived in her guesthouse for a while, and we would eat with her." Were Ashley and Anna friends? "I'm trying to be nice," Ashley says delicately. "Anna is stunning to look at, but she's probably a bit damaged from what

she's been through. That's how she acts—a bit damaged."

But another kind of damage really gets Ashley fired up, the kind caused by steroids and human growth hormone. "It's out there, definitely," says Ashley, who claims she has never been tempted to use an artificial boost. "If you look at some of these girls and then look at their parents, you can see something's fishy."

When not playing or practicing, Ashley's a homebody. You'll often find her near her house, running on the sand or tossing around a football with friends. But she occasionally glams up for a night on the town. "Coming to L.A. was an eye-opener," she says. "You see beautiful women in beautiful cars, and it makes you a little

competitive. But I love it. I can't imagine being anywhere else right now."

Then, with the flash of a grin, the small-town girl from Flintstone comes back into view. "I grew up in a place with one stoplight, but now look at me," she says in genuine amazement at the turns her life has taken. "I'm still true to my upbringing, but I'm so grateful to get this chance to show myself as a woman, as an athlete, as someone who has struggled to overcome things. I'm really happy right now."

Now she has given herself a chance to build on that happiness. As Ashley climbs the ladder, we'll be right behind her, cheering her on.

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happy with who you are."

The time away from the game helped Ashley clarify her priorities, and she has never been happier. "The decision to do PLAYBOY came from this newfound pride in my body and in my strength as an athlete," she says. "I feel sexy in my skin now."

Talking with Ashley, we realize why female tennis players draw so much attention. She's charming, laughs easily and is definitely a people pleaser, as when she gives up the goods about what really goes on in the women's locker room. "Tennis players don't mind showing off their bodies," she says. "Often in the locker room I feel other girls' eyes on me. If I'm feeling fit, that can be intimidating to my competition. It means I'll be really quick out there."



Work Out Grapevine

Words Fail Us

We know *neathage* and *side boob*, but we have no cute term for this one: GWYNETH PALTROW's skirt is so short we can see her left buttock *from the front*. What is that—retro cheek? Front rearage?



It'll Never Work Out

JACKIE WARNER is the star of *Work Out* on Bravo, and her abs could beat up your abs. Look all you want, fellas, but don't touch: She likes girls.



Stripped Moll

Don't mess with KERRI PARKER—she's one of Sal Maroni's girls. Played by Eric Roberts in *The Dark Knight*, Maroni is a Gotham City gangster who tussles with Christian Bale's Batman.

Porn Leader

In Rome's municipal elections, veteran porn star MILLY D'ABBRACCIO ran as a Socialist. "Enough of these ass faces," proclaimed her poster, and in interviews she described herself as the derriere of her party.



Journalistic Grab-Ass

Little is known about MENA SUVARI's boyfriend. Gossip columnists say only "dancer Simone Sestito." Here's our try at specificity: close-cropped, dagger-tongued, well-linked, huge-watched, saggy-pantsed madras-tastic dancing butt squeezer Simone Sestito. Oh, that guy.



Get Your Smirn Off

For all you guys forced by wives or girlfriends to watch the show:

Yes, we agree that a *Women of Dancing With the Stars* pictorial is a great idea.

We're on the case. Does that mean this peek down KARINA SMIRNOFF's dress is a sneak preview? We're not telling.



Whatever It Means, She's It

We couldn't believe TINA JONES didn't even make the finals of the Page 3 Idol contest held by U.K. tabloid *The Sun*. (See May's *Grapevine* for the winner.) She says she's "well chuffed" about appearing in *PLAYBOY*.

Next Month



HIGH TEASE: BRITISH PAGE 3 GIRLS.



WILL THE BUCKEYES FINALLY STOP CHOKING?



THE RISE OF G.N.R.—WELCOME TO THEIR JUNGLE.



AMANDA HUG 'N' KISS.

ANNA FARIS—YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT HER FORTHCOMING MOVIE *THE HOUSE BUNNY* AND ITS AMUSING TAKE ON *PLAYBOY*, BUT DID YOU KNOW SHE CAME UP WITH THE CONCEPT? OUR COVER GIRL REVEALS THAT AND MORE IN 20Q.

GEEK LOVE—*BEAUTY AND THE GEEK* PROVED TWO THINGS: OPPOSITES DON'T NECESSARILY ATTRACT, AND **AMANDA COREY** IS A STUNNER. WE GIVE HER A BREAK FROM QUADRATIC EQUATIONS AND PROVIDE THE *PLAYBOY* MODEL WITH HER OWN PICTORIAL.

YOUNG GUNS—LOS ANGELES, 1985: A POSSE OF GUITAR-TOTING OUTLAWS STARTS TO CLAW ITS WAY TO THE TOP OF THE SUNSET STRIP MUSIC SCENE. AMID RUMORS THAT AXL'S NEW **GUNS N' ROSES** MAY FINALLY DELIVER THE LONG-AWAITED *CHINESE DEMOCRACY* ALBUM, **STEPHEN DAVIS** GIVES AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE FORMATION OF THE DIRTIEST, MOST DANGEROUS—AND GREATEST—ROCK BAND OF THE MODERN ERA.

PAGE 3 GIRLS—NO WONDER THE ENGLISH ARE SO JOVIAL: THEIR NEWSPAPERS FEATURE NUDE MODELS. **KEELEY HAZELL**, **LUCY PINDER** AND **MICHELLE MARSH** HEAD OUR SHOWCASE OF THESE GORGEOUS BRITISH SENSATIONS.

NOBODY MOVE III—IN THE THIRD INSTALLMENT OF **DENIS JOHNSON**'S GRITTY MODERN NOIR, GAMBOL IS ON THE MEND AND HUNTING JIMMY LUNTZ. ANITA HAS HER OWN PLANS FOR

REVENGE, WHICH INVOLVE BULLYING A CORRUPT JUDGE OUT OF \$2.3 MILLION. AND JIMMY? HE'S TRYING TO STAY ALIVE, BUT HE HAS FALLEN FOR ANITA—A WOMAN WITH NOTHING TO LOSE.

FAST COMPANY—AFTER WE REVIEW THE MOST FRIGHTENINGLY FLEET SPEED RACERS FROM THE PAST QUARTER CENTURY, WE REDLINE THE SPEEDOMETER OF THE NEW SSC ULTIMATE AERO—AT 256 MPH—IN THE DESERT OUTSIDE LAS VEGAS.

THE REAL MCCAIN—REPUBLICAN NOMINEE JOHN MCCAIN CALLS HIMSELF A GOLDWATER CONSERVATIVE. NOT SO FAST, SAYS FORMER NIXON WHITE HOUSE COUNSEL **JOHN DEAN**.

2008 PIGSKIN PREVIEW—A SERIES OF STUNNING UPSETS LAST SEASON (APPALACHIAN STATE HUMBLING MICHIGAN AND STANFORD TOPPLING USC HEAD THE LIST) CREATED A JUMBLE ATOP THE NCAA POLLS. THIS YEAR **GARY COLE** SEES A CLEAR WINNER. HINT: THE TEAM HAS WON THE TITLE WITHIN THE PAST DECADE.

MAD MEN—AMC'S DRAMA BROUGHT HIP 1960S AMERICAN FASHION BACK TO DESIGNERS' WORKROOMS. NOW WE DRESS THE CAST IN THIS FALL'S HOTTEST THROWBACK SUITS.

PLUS: *HELL RIDE*'S **MARY CASTRO** IS NAMED BABE OF THE MONTH, AND MISS SEPTEMBER **VALERIE MASON** COULD PASS FOR A FEMIN IN THE FLESH.